

# WILD WEST



A MAGAZINE CONTAINING STORIES. SKETCHES Etc. OF WESTERN LIFE.

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## YOUNG WILD WEST'S GRIT!

OR THE GHOST OF GUANTLET GULCH. *AND OTHER STORIES*

*By AN OLD SCOUT.*

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One of the bolder ones, however, opened fire on the thing with his revolver; but only a hollowated  
mocking laugh was heard. Then all of a sudden a sputtering ball of fire  
seemed to shoot from the mouth of the spectre.



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## Young Wild West's Grit

— OR —

### THE GHOST OF GAUNTLET GULCH

By AN OLD SCOUT

#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE SURPRISED BRONCHO BUSTER.

It was a rather warm day in early spring, and the miners who lived in Weston were getting a hustle on themselves.

Several big strikes had been made during the winter, and the lucky ones went about declaring that pay dirt could be found anywhere, and that those who didn't find it were too lazy to dig for it.

And this was true in a certain sense, for Weston was located in the richest part of the Black Hills.

There were about twelve hundred people living in the town now, and there was more money than you could "shake a stick at," to use the expression of Dove-Eye Dave, the president of the Wild West Mining and Improvement Company.

Young Wild West, the champion deadshot and prince of the saddle, was responsible for the rapid advancement of the town.

He was standing in front of the office, talking with some friends the day upon which our story opens.

The friends consisted of Jim Dart, a youth, Cheyenne Charlie, a dark-bearded scout, Jack Robedee, an Indian fighter, Lively Rick, a miner, and Brown, the proprietor of the Gazoo, which was the leading hotel in Weston.

Our hero had not yet reached his twentieth year, but he was about as big as he ever would be, being five feet nine in height, broad-shouldered, and weighing a hundred and sixty pounds.

His wealth of chestnut hair hung over his shoulders in rich profusion, and the fancy sombrero was thrown just far enough back on his head to set off his handsome features to the best advantage.

His dark eyes twinkled with good humor and interest as he listened to what Brown, the hotel man, was saying.

"This broncho buster must have an awful big opinion of himself," Wild said.

"Yes," replied Brown. "He says that he has got a broncho in the lot he brought over that no man kin ride two hundred feet without bein' thrown once or more."

"Well, that might be. But what was the fellow's idea in saying this?"

"Oh, he's lookin' for some one to come along and make a bet with him. He asked me if there was any expert riders around here, an' I told him I didn't know how expert they was, but I allowed there was jest as good around here as there was anywhere else."

"All right," says he. "Find me one of 'em an' I'll give him a chance to make some money, an' it will be awful easy for him 'cause all he has got to do is to ride my bucking broncho a couple of hundred feet without gittin' dumped."

Jim Dart turned to Wild at this and said:

"You are not going to allow a stranger to come around and put up any such bluff as that, are you?"

"Well, if he should offer any such inducement as that to me I might feel inclined to take him up," replied our hero.

"Suppose we take a walk over to my place?" suggested Brown. "The broncho buster is stopping there. He is a good sort of a fellow in his way, and is quite honest in his opinions, I think. He certainly has a fine lot of horses, and it ain't likely that he'll be very long in gittin' rid of 'em at his own price."

"Well, I don't mind taking a walk over. Come on, Jim and Charlie. We will hear what the broncho buster has to say."

"I guess we had better go, too, hey, Rick?" spoke up Jack Robedee, placing the deck of cards he had just taken from his desk back in the drawer.

"Sure thing!" exclaimed the sporting miner from Devil Creek, grabbing his big brown felt hat and pointing it on his head.

"Well, I am quite sure none of us will have any objections," said Wild. "I saw you get out that pack of cards, and thought you were going to have a game to pass the time away."

"So we was. But I reckon this broncho buster will make some amusement for us," and Jack grinned as he thought of what was liable to happen.

It lacked about an hour of noon when our friends left the office and started for the Gazoo, Wild and Brown walking ahead.

Before they reached the hotel they noticed that something more than usual was going on in the big square in front of it.

A crowd of miners and business men of the town were gathered about a bunch of lively-looking saddle-horses.

There must have been forty in the lot, and a tall, raw-boned man, attired in a fancy cowboy rig, was giving them, in a fog-horn voice, the good points of the steeds he had for sale.

"Yer can't beat this bunch of bronchos that I've got here, gentlemen," he was saying as our friends came up. "Every one of 'em is broke to ther saddle but one, and they are all as sound as a dollar. If yer travel from here to Texas yer can't beat 'em, gents. Take yer pick of ther critters, an' I'll tell yer my askin' price."

There were a number of men in the crowd who wanted to buy horses, and these promptly accepted the invitation extended to them, and began to examine those they took a fancy to.

"Don't be afraid of gittin' yer ears kicked off, gents!" the man continued. "They are all gentle enough but ther billy-goat what's tied to ther tree. I'm Tom Turpin, ther boss broncho buster, an' when I says a horse is broke, yer kin gamble that it is kerekt. I do ther breakin' myself, an' that's why."

"You started your sale a little sooner than you calculated



to, didn't you?" asked Brown, walking up to the owner of the steeds.

"Yes, pardner, I had to. Yer see, ther gang got so anxious to git a chance ter buy that I couldn't wait any longer. You hain't found any one that wants ter make that couple of hundred, have yer?"

"Well, I don't know whether I have or not."

As the hotel-keeper said this, he looked at Young Wild West. Naturally the eyes of the broncho buster followed his gaze, and then his face lighted up.

"You don't want ter have a try fer it, do yer, young feller?" he queried.

"Well, I don't know," replied Wild. "Can't you handle the buckner yourself?"

"No! If I could I wouldn't offer two hundred dollars to any one as could. You see, I won't allow as any man livin' kin ride a critter that I can't. There mought be some as kin do it jest as good; but beat me—well, I guess not! I'm Tom Turpin, ther boss broncho buster, an' what I can't straddle in ther line of horseflesh no one can!"

"Do I understand it that you want to bet two hundred dollars that there is no one in this crowd who can ride your bucking broncho two hundred feet?"

"Yes; I'll put it that way, if it suits yer," and Tom Turpin broke into a hearty laugh. "It sounds awful funny to hear you talk that way, young feller. If you are thinkin' about tryin' I'll warn yer that yer'll git yer clothes all mussed up, and mebbe a bone or two broken. Ther billy-goat is the wurst thing I ever tackled, an' when I say that it means a whole lot."

"Well, my friend, if I try your broncho and get fooled, it will be the first one that ever fooled me," and with that Young Wild West proceeded to count out two hundred dollars.

"See here! Don't!" cried the man, almost pleadingly. "Don't mind about counting out your money; it ain't necessary. I did say that I would bet two hundred dollars that you couldn't ride him a couple of hundred feet, but I'll take that back. I won't bet no money, but I'll make you a present of two hundred dollars if you do."

"All right, then. Just to show you that the horse never walked that I couldn't ride if I tried, I'll accept your offer. Let me sec. Was it two hundred yards, or two hundred feet you said?"

"It was two hundred yards, but you said two hundred feet, so we'll let it go at that."

"Well, as I don't want to take any advantage of you, suppose you make it—say half a mile?"

The broncho buster looked hard at Wild for a moment, and then he burst into another laugh.

"See here," he said; "I guess you are only foolin', young feller."

"I was never more serious in my life."

"All right, then. Have it your own way."

Turpin had begun to notice the expressions on the various faces around him, and he could not help noticing that the majority were not at all surprised at what the handsome young fellow said.

Many of them even looked as though they were confident that he would do just as he said he would, and that made him do some thinking.

But never for an instant did he believe that Wild would be able to ride the bucking broncho twenty feet, much less half a mile.

"You kin try it right away," he said. "I won't make any sales untill you are through."

"Let me have a lariat," said Young Wild West. "I am going to do the thing in the proper way."

Turpin soon furnished him with what he wanted.

"Now, then, turn your billy-goat, as you call him, loose when I give the word."

Our hero walked out into the open, coiling the lasso as he spoke.

The broncho buster handed Brown two hundred dollars at that moment.

"That's fer ther boy if he does as he says he will," he remarked. "Now, then, youngster, sing out when you are ready."

"I am ready now," was the reply. "Let him go."

Turpin walked around to the head of the broncho and untied the halter.

Then he gave him a smart cut with the whip and off went the animal almost directly toward Wild.

To show how vicious he was, the animal reared and plunged as though he was trying to make mincemeat of the ground beneath his hoofs.

Young Wild West judged his distance carefully and then let the lasso go.

The noose caught the broncho around both forelegs as he was rearing and threw him to the ground as neatly as any one in the crowd had ever seen it done.

A cheer followed this feat, and then Tom Turpin allowed just a shade of doubt to cross his face.

He had not expected to see the wild steed caught as easily as that.

"Bring me a saddle and bridle, Charlie!" Wild called out, as he sat on the struggling animal's head and held him down.

The required articles were right at hand, and seizing them, Cheyenne Charlie hurried to the spot.

The bridle was buckled on the broncho in no time, and then, after two or three attempts, the saddle was put in its proper place.

Up jumped the broncho, and before he had landed on his four feet Young Wild West was in the saddle.

Then the fun began in earnest.

The broncho did not intend to be beaten at his great game, and our hero was determined that he should be.

The steed began to buck for all it was worth, but the rider seemed to be a very part of him, and was not the least bit disturbed.

"I guess I'll take that two hundred all right!" called out Wild.

"You ain't only just started," replied Turpin; "though I must say yer doin' mighty well."

Wild let the broncho have his own way for about a minute, and then he pressed his spurs into the flanks and urged him forward in a commanding tone.

But instead of obeying, the animal dropped to the ground and tried to see what rolling would accomplish.

The agile rider was prepared for such a move as this, and he was off and had his head on the ground in a jiffy.

"Now, old fellow, when you are ready, just say so," he exclaimed, holding the head close to the ground. "There is no specified time about this, so I will take it easy."

But the horse did not like that sort of treatment, and struggled to get up again almost immediately.

Wild allowed him to do so, leaping into the saddle again as quick as lightning.

The broncho kicked and plunged, reared and snorted, and, in fact, did everything known to a bucking mustang.

But he could no more unseat the rider than he could throw off his tail.

Wild's friends were smiling with a great deal of confidence.

They could not help doing this as they took note of the look of dismay that was gradually coming over the face of the broncho buster.

"Who in thunder is that young feller, anyhow?" Turpin finally asked, turning to Brown, who was grinning like a child who had just received a present for being good.

"Who is it? Why, it's Young Wild West, you fool! You ought to have found that out before you made your proposition. That young feller is nicknamed ther prince of ther saddle. Ther horse that he can't break an' ride ain't been born yet."

"Gee whiz!"

That was all Turpin said.

Then a wild cheer from the crowd made his ears buzz.

The broncho had given up the battle and Wild was riding him on a dead run for the outskirts of the town.

As our hero disappeared around the corner of a building the miners turned and gave the discomfited broncho buster the laugh.

But four minutes had elapsed since the boy had lassoed the horse, and in three more he came galloping back.

"Whoa!" he cried, and the broncho came to a halt instantly and stood tremblingly before Turpin, whose jaw had dropped to its fullest extent.

"You win, young feller," he said. "You are ther best I ever seed."

## CHAPTER II.

### LIVELY RICK MEETS A GHOST.

Wild dismounted and turned the broncho over to its owner. "I have tamed worse than he is," he said. "But still he was a pretty tough proposition."

"Here's your money, Wild," said Brown, stepping up and handing over the two hundred Turpin had given him.



Our hero took it, and then turning to the broncho buster, exclaimed:

"I won this money fair and square; but I am not going to take it. You strike me as being an honest man, who works pretty hard for a living. So just accept this two hundred as a present from Young Wild West."

The man looked at him keenly for a moment, and then reached out and took the money.

"I'll accept your present," he observed; "an' now I'll give you one. Jest understand that this here bucking brute is yours, and that he is a present from Tom Turpin, ther broncho buster, who got beat at his own game for ther first time in his life to-day."

"All right," laughed Wild. "I'll take him. I might be able to have some fun with him once in a while."

"You ought to; you kin manage him so well. I never seen such a thing in my whole life before! Why, he's standin' as still as a mouse now."

"I let him know that I was his master, and that accounts for it."

Wild took the horse and tied him to a tree, the miners cheering him as he did so.

Then Tom Turpin proceeded with his sale.

The incident had put every one in an excellent humor, and in less than an hour the man had sold all his horses but three.

And they were partly spoken for.

"You fellers here in Weston are all right," said Turpin, a few minutes later when he stood at the end of the bar in the Gazoo. "You have got ther finest town of its size that I've ever been in, and you've got ther best horseman I ever seen or heard of. Young Wild West has no equal, gentlemen; as sure as you're born, he ain't!"

"I guess we rather knowed that," answered Brown, with a chuckle. "Young Wild West can't be beat at anything, let alone ridin' buckin' mustangs. He's an all-around athlete, an' he kin lick his weight in wildcats, either with his hands an' feet, or his weepins. That's ther kind of a hair-pin he is, ain't it, boys?"

"Right you are!" came the answer from the crowd that had gathered in the place.

Our hero and his friends had returned to the office of the company, and an extra stall was being made for the bucking broncho by a couple of workmen.

By the time this job was completed it was noon and all hands went to dinner.

The rest of the day was spent quietly enough.

Toward night Lively Rick suddenly took it into his head to go back to Devil Creek.

"It's goin' ter be a dark night, Rick," said Jack. "You ought to have started before."

"Oh, I don't mind the darkness," was the reply. "I have got a short cut, you know; I go through Gauntlet Gulch, an' that cuts off nigh onto two miles."

"Yes; I heard you say last week that you had found a shorter way over here. So they call it Gauntlet Gulch, hey?"

"That's what Dove-Eye Dave says it is called. Got ther name because a couple of prospectors rode through it under the fire of a gang of Sioux, who laid all along the sides. Ther prospectors got through all right, an' so they named it Gauntlet Gulch."

"A good name for it. How long is the gulch?"

"About three miles."

"Putty crooked, ain't it?"

"No; almost straight all the way through. It is mighty narrow in some places, though. Only two horses kin git through abreast."

"Well, if you don't look out some of these times a landslide will happen when you are goin' through an' you'll git buried. Then there will be a weepin' an' wailin' over in Devil Creek, for I feel certain that Nevada Kate would go plumb crazy if she were to lose you."

"Mebbe she would, Jack. But, anyhow, Kate is a good girl, in spite of ther fact that she's got rough ways. She's honest an' true, an' worth her weight in gold."

"I believe you, Rick; I believe you."

The two became more confidential as they talked, and they soon let each other know that they were engaged to be married.

"I'll tell you what we will do," said Rick, as he was ready to leave. "We'll have a talk with Wild about it an' let him make arrangements for a grand double weddin' here in Weston some day in the near future."

"Agreed!" exclaimed Jack, and then they shook hands so fervently that they attracted the attention of Wild and Jim, who were standing a few feet distant.

"You fellows seem to be greatly in earnest about some thing," spoke up Jim.

"We will let you know all about it some time," replied Jack.

"I think I could guess what you are talking about," laughed our hero.

"Well, never mind, then," retorted Lively Rick. "This is a gal night, an' you ought to know it as well as any of ther rest of us."

"That's so. I believe it is."

"Just as if he didn't know it," and Robedee grinned, showing how well he liked that sort of talk.

It was just about an hour before sunset when Lively Rick set out.

He had a good horse, and hoped to make the seventeen or eighteen miles of his journey in about two and a half hours.

The traveling was pretty even all the way, since the gulch cut off a rather tedious ascent.

Since he had been associated with Young Wild West Rick had learned a whole lot that he never knew before, and he was now as good as the best of them at shooting and riding.

He had also learned that it was policy to always be on the lookout for danger, and if there was any shooting to be done to make it a point to get in the first shot, if it was any way possible.

It was as dark as pitch when Rick reached the mouth of the gulch.

The moon did not rise till well toward morning, and the stars were hidden by light clouds that went scurrying along close to the mountain-tops.

But the honest, rough-and-ready man knew the way well as he had traveled it often of late, and halting at the commencement of the dark rift in the mountain, he filled and lighted his pipe, and then making sure that his revolver was ready for instant use, he boldly rode forward.

Like Rick, the horse knew the way, and where it narrowed came down to a gentle trot, or a walk, if it became necessary.

On either side of the lone horseman, above his head, irregular ledges ran, and though he could not see them now, he knew they were there.

When Lively Rick had made about half the distance through the gulch a heavy mist began to rapidly settle in it.

A fog had settled upon the mountain, and a draught of air was sucking it downward into the narrow pass.

"Gee!" muttered our friend, as he turned up the collar of his coat, "this is as bad as rain. The chill is sometimes bad too. Well, I'll soon be out of this place, and then I'll strike more pleasant going."

He was just urging his horse to a faster gait when a shrill scream broke upon his ears.

It increased in volume until it reached such a high pitch that it sent an icy chill down his spinal column, and then it died down and ended in a heart-rending wail.

Lively Rick was a pretty brave sort of a man, but that was just a little too much for him.

Like the majority of those who are brought up as he had been, with little or no schooling, he was superstitious, and as that cry had not sounded at all natural to him, his mind reverted to things uncanny at once.

But the terrible cry had not frightened only Rick; his horse reared and plunged about in the narrow place, trembling in every sinew.

A deathly stillness followed, and then just as the man from Devil Creek had come to the conclusion that the cry must have come from a catamount, the terrible sound was repeated.

"Who in thunder are you?" yelled Rick, in a voice that was mingled with fear and desperation.

"Murder! Murder! They are cutting my heart out and tearing my body in two!" came the quick answer from the bank of mist right in front of the frightened horseman.

Lively Rick was absolutely certain that there was no one in the spot where the words came from; so there was only one conclusion for him to come to.

Spooks! Spirits! Witches! Ghosts!

The gulch was haunted by one or all of them.

"Git up!" he shouted in a frenzy, and the trembling steed bounded forward.

But only for a few steps, and then the animal reared on its hind legs and uttered a snort of fright.

And no wonder, for right in front of it was the bluish-white figure of a woman with outstretched arms.

Completely unnerved, but with a keen sense of self-preservation, Lively Rick wheeled his horse around and started for the other end of the gulch.

Regardless of the narrow places, the frightened animal gal-



loped madly along, the rider's legs brushing the jagged sides in many places.

Nor was the pace slackened until the gulch was left far behind.

Lively Rick had changed his mind about going back to Devil Creek that night.

"I'll go right to Weston ag'in," he muttered, when he had calmed down a little. "My! but that screech was awful! An' ther ghost! Oh, I never expected to live to see sich a thing as that. It was a woman that you could almost see through, an' she must have been ten feet tall! No wonder I felt uneasy-like when that fog settled down so sudden."

That he had seen and heard a genuine ghost the man did not doubt for a second.

He had always believed that there were such things, but this was the first time he had ever seen one with his own eyes.

As he neared Weston he gradually became calmer, but never once did he have any doubts about the apparition being genuine.

"I'll tell Young Wild West about it—exactly what I heerd an' seen," he thought. "I'd give a hundred dollars if he had been there with me! I wonder what he would have done, anyhow? He's got ther most grit of any one I know of, but I'll bet he would have done ther same as I did—lit out as fast as he could."

As Rick thought over the matter he was not so sure that Wild would have done as he did. But he was satisfied that he would have done the proper thing if he had.

When Rick reached the first hotel in Weston he dismounted and put a stiff horn of whisky in him.

### CHAPTER III.

#### BEN AND BOB, THE BAD BROTHERS.

When Lively Rick arrived at the home of Young Wild West he found no one there but Wing Wah, the Chinese cook, and Ike, the darky servant.

The three partners who lived there had gone to see their girls.

Rick was just dying to tell his story, so for want of better listeners he started in to tell it to the servants.

"Wha' for you come back, anyway, Marsa Rick?" asked Ike, interrupting him before he had said six words.

"That's what I want to tell you, if you'll keep your black mouth shut long enough," replied the Devil Creek miner, who was in such terrible earnest that he could not bear being interrupted.

"He, he, he!" giggled the Mongolian, pleased because the darky had received such a sharp reply. "Niggee talkee too muchee. He biggee fool, allee samee—"

"Shut up, you almond-eyed, yellow-faced, pig-tailed galoot!" roared Lively Rick, picking up the boot-jack that Jack Robedee always kept lying in a corner near the door. "Shut up, ther pair of you. Shut up, I say! I want to tell you about the ghost I seen. Ther ghost of a woman ten feet high, who had voice on her like ther wind whistlin' through a graveyard on a stormy night. It was ther awfulest sight I—"

"O-o-o-h-h-h-h!" groaned the pair of them in unison, the eyes of the Chinaman shutting tightly and those of the negro spreading to the size of small saucers.

"That's what I seen, all right," resumed Rick, and then there being a deathly silence, he resumed his story, growing eloquent as he neared the climax and adding just enough to it to almost paralyze his two listeners.

Rick could not have found better ones to tell it to, for his face was just pale enough, and he was so earnest that they believed every word he said.

After having gone all through it again, and adding a little to the story, the man who had seen a real ghost started for the home of Cheyenne Charlie to tell him about it.

He found the scout all right, and then he lost no time in letting him know why it was that he had returned to Weston in such an unexpected manner.

Charlie shook his head when he listened to the earnest tale of Rick.

He was just superstitious enough to believe at least half the story.

Besides, he knew that Rick was very anxious to get to Devil Creek to see his girl, and the fact of his not going was sufficient to make him think that Gauntlet Gulch was certainly haunted.

"You seen ther thing, then?" observed Charlie, after he had thought well over the matter.

"Seen it? Well, I guess I did. Ther awful yell was enough to freeze a feller's blood, but when ther ghost showed up in front of me I couldn't stand it any longer. My horse was so badly scared that it are a great wonder that he didn't jump out from under me. Ther way he run through that gulch beat anything I ever dreamed of, I kin tell yer!"

"I guess I'll go an' call Wild an' Jim," said Cheyenne Charlie, after another pause. "I jest want 'em to hear what you have been through since you left Weston an hour before sunset."

"Yes; I'd like 'em to hear it, too," Lively Rick observed. The scout went out to do as he had suggested, and a few minutes later he came back with our hero and Jim.

"What is the trouble, Rick?" asked Wild. "Charlie tells me you met a ghost over in Gauntlet Gulch."

"I sartinly did," was the quick reply. "I never had sich an experience before in my life. I was scared mighty bad, an' I ain't afraid to admit it."

"That's right. An open confession is good for the soul, they say. Well, now just tell us this wonderful story of yours; I want to hear it real bad."

Rick did so, telling it exactly as it happened.

"It was certainly a remarkable adventure you met with, Rick," Wild observed. "But you made one mistake, I think."

"Mebbe I did. But I jist thought about gittin' away as fast as I could, an' so did my horse."

"You should have wheeled and run back a hundred yards or so, and then halted and waited developments. You might have heard the ghost do some talking, then."

"Oh, I kin see that you don't think it was a ghost; I kin tell by ther way you talk."

"To tell the truth, Rick, I don't think it was a ghost you saw."

"Well, what in thunder was it, then?" and the man from Devil Creek shot a glance at Young Wild West which plainly meant: "Now I've got yer; answer that, if ye kin!"

"Well, such a thing could be that you heard the wail of a catamount, and then the mist might have formed into the shape of a woman just then. You admit that the cry made the cold chills run down your back, so in that stage of your fear and excitement it would have been quite easy for you to imagine almost anything."

"All right. Yer kin think that way if yer wanten. Wild. But every word I've told yer is gospel truth."

"See here, Rick, don't get mad and imagine I don't believe your story, for I do believe every word of it. What I don't believe is that it was a spirit you saw. No such things as ghosts and goblins exist, or ever did exist. They are only the creations of a disordered mind. Not that I mean that your mind is out of the way any, Rick. But the whole thing is that the person who first invented ghosts and wraiths, and such like, wasn't exactly right in the head."

"Well, this is the first time I ever seen a ghost, but I know people that had seen 'em long ago. You may talk as you like, Wild, but you can't make me believe that there ain't such things as ghosts. My eyes are mighty good yet, an' I reckon they didn't deceive me to-night."

As the miner said this, he shook his head to show that nothing could make him believe otherwise.

The subject was changed then, and after a few minutes' conversation, Lively Rick excused himself and went over to the Gazoo.

He declined the invitation of both Wild and Charlie to stop with them, which made them think that he was just a little bit miffed.

"See here, boys," said our hero, when he had gone. "we must investigate this ghost business. I never saw a person more in earnest in all my life than Rick was when he was describing his adventure in Gauntlet Gulch."

"Nor I, either," spoke up Jim. "He certainly did see something uncanny in appearance, no matter what it was that he heard."

"It might have been a spirit, or something like that," Charlie remarked, shaking his head as though there was room for doubt.

Wild laughed at this.

"Don't think that way, Charlie," he said: "at least, don't think that way till you have had a good look at the thing yourself."

"Well, why can't we have a look at it?"

"We will have a try—that is, if we hear anything more about the wonderful ghost of Gauntlet Gulch. Why, it was only a day or two ago that I heard there was going to be a



regular stage line from here to Devil Creek, and that the owners of the line proposed to widen the narrow places in the gulch, and use it for a short cut. Look at the long climb it saves, either going that way or coming this."

Wild and Dick went back to bid their girls good-night, as it was now time for them to go home.

On the way over to their house Jack Robedee overtook them, and when they told him that Lively Rick had met with a ghost half-way through Gauntlet Gulch, and had been so badly scared that he came back to Weston, Jack was very much astonished.

Like Cheyenne Charlie, he had believed the story.

And if the truth had been known, Jim Dart believed just a little of it, too.

It is all in the way a person is brought up.

It so happened those with whom our hero spent his earliest days laughed at the mere mention of ghosts, and poohpoohed the idea of there being such a thing.

Consequently Young Wild West was the only one among those Rick told of his adventure who was not awed to a certain extent at the recital of it.

The next morning Wild went over to the Gazoo as soon as he got up.

He thought he would like to see Lively Rick before he went over to the Creek.

Quiet John, the bartender, was the only one in the place when he went in, and on inquiry gave Wild the information that Rick had started at daylight.

"I wonder if he is going to take the short cut through Gauntlet Gulch, as they call it?" remarked the prince of the saddle.

"I rather think not," was the bartender's reply. "Say, Wild, is Lively Rick a truthful man?"

"I have never had the least reason to doubt that he was, and I have known him for quite a long time."

"Well, did he tell you that yarn about the ghost he seen last night?"

"Yes."

"What do you think of it?"

"Oh, I believe he saw and heard something out of the ordinary and got badly scared."

"Well, I suppose there is nothing so odd about the gulch being haunted. It was only discovered a week or so ago. A slide down the mountain broke away a big pile of rocks and dirt at this end of it, and that induced some one to explore it. I hear that it cuts off fully three miles of the journey to Devil Creek and does away with the tedious hill-climbing. Next Saturday a stage route will open, and regular trips will be made three times a week between here and the Creek. They will go through the gulch, too, as a few kegs of blasting powder will fix it in good shape, so I hear."

"Well, John, I hope it is true, what you have heard, for what will prove a benefit to Devil Creek will certainly help Weston, since the best route there lies through our town. One thing I think you have been misinformed on, however, and that is about the gulch only being discovered a week or so ago. Dove-Eye Dave has known that it was there a long while. He is the one who named it, I believe."

"Yes; I know that. What I meant to say is that no one knew that by going through it they could save three miles of the journey to the Creek."

"That is right, I guess. It is the same company that owns the stages that run from Spondulicks here that is pushing the route to Devil Creek, is it not?"

"Yes. Two of the head ones of the company are stopping here. They came early in the evening last night. You should get acquainted with them, as they speak very highly of you, having seen you at the Cowboy Carnival over in Spondulicks last Thanksgiving Day."

"I am always glad to meet good people," Wild answered. "I'll take a run over some time this forenoon."

With this he walked back home to get his breakfast, satisfied that the Gazoo's bartender had not been nicknamed Quiet John because he did not do much talking.

Wild came to the conclusion that every time he wanted to know what was new in town hereafter he would go to the Gazoo at a time when there was no one around and have a talk with Quiet John.

That morning at the office the principal topic of conversation was what happened to Lively Rick the night before.

About ten o'clock Young Wild West signified his intention of going over to the Gazoo.

Cheyenne Charlie said he would go, too, so they walked on over.

Wild stopped at the post-office long enough to exchange a few words with his sweetheart, she being the post-mistress, and then went direct to the Gazoo.

Two steaming horses were hitched in front of the hotel, which showed that a couple of new arrivals were there.

As our friends went inside, they saw them standing in front of the bar, plying the whisky in them at a great rate.

Wild and Charlie paid little attention to them, and walked into the back room, where they heard Brown talking to some one.

The hotel proprietor got up when he saw them and gave them a welcome in his usual hearty way.

"Come right in," he said. "We was jest talkin' about you, Wild. These two gents belong to ther stage-coach company, an' they are goin' to open up a line through Gauntlet Gulch to Devil Creek this Saturday comin'."

"Glad to meet the gentlemen," answered Wild, shaking the proffered hands of the two men who were alone in the back room with Brown. "I am also glad to hear that a stage line is going to connect us with the Creek. It will be a boom to both towns."

"That's right," replied one of the men. "As the landlord didn't tell you our names, I'll do so. I am Doc Melville, and this is Bill Slack. We each own an eighth of ther stock in ther company, an' we are superintendin' ther business of puttin' ther road through the gulch."

"Well, my name is Young Wild West, and this is my friend and partner, Cheyenne Charlie."

Then the two men shook hands with Charlie, and all hands took a seat.

At this juncture the two new arrivals, who had been drinking at the bar, walked in.

"How are yer, boys?" said one of them, with a great deal of familiarity. "Us two has just come down from Deadwood with an idee of locatin' somewhere around here. We want to be friends with everybody, an' so you needn't think nothin' of it when we tell you that we are called Ben and Bob, the Bad Brothers."

"It isn't names that go for anything here in Weston; it is the way people act," Wild could not help saying in reply.

"Seems to me that you have got a lot to say for a boy. I guess I'll give your nose a pinch, just to learn yer to speak when you're spoken to!"

It was the fellow who had done the talking who said this, and he promptly reached over to make good his threat.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### FARO FAN GIVES SOME GOOD ADVICE.

Wild, of course, was not going to allow any one to pinch his nose, if he knew it, so he simply drew back his head as the man reached for him.



"Don't try that again, please," he said, calmly. "I am not in the habit of allowing people to make so free with my nose as that. It struck me that you came in this room for the express purpose of starting a row, and that was why I spoke to you as I did."

Brown saw that there was a storm brewing, so he promptly got up and urged the two men who called themselves the Bad Brothers to go out into the barroom.

"Not much we won't go out!" was the angry retort. "This is a public room, and I want you to understand that there isn't enough of you in here to put the Bad Brothers out, let alone that young whippersnapper there!"

"Don't fool yourself on him," said Brown, keeping his eye on the hands of the two and sitting down, evidently satisfied that there would be blood to clean up before very long.

Each of the men had a brace of revolvers in his belt, but they were powerfully built fellows, and it was evident that they were depending on their strength if it came to a case of putting them out.

Both Young Wild West and Cheyenne Charlie had risen to their feet, and they stood facing the two men.

"So you ain't goin' to allow me to pull your nose, then?" observed the talkative fellow.

"No."

"How about me?" spoke up the other.

"You shan't do it, either."

"I reckon I'll have a try, anyway."

"Look out for yourself, then."

"Oh, I'll look out all right. Don't worry about me."

He made a sudden grab for Wild and just missed him by an inch.

Then he got a blow between the eyes that made him see stars and stagger back into the arms of his brother.

Wild was in for it now, and he meant to teach them a lesson if they persisted in annoying him.

"Great caterpillars, Ben!" gasped the man who got hit.

"That's what I say!"

"Ther boy hit me!"

"I know he did. What did you let him do it for?"

"I'll just wring his neck for doin' it; see if I don't!"

"Go ahead an' do it. I'll see that you have fair play. If any one interferes I'll drop him with a bullet."

"There won't any one interfere," said Young Wild West, calmly. "I'll attend to your brother first, and then you can have some, if you want it."

It was Ben's turn to be astonished.

He looked as though he could hardly believe his senses.

"Give him a good thrashin', Bob. I'm afraid I'll git mad an' pull a gun on him."

"Don't do that. He's only a boy."

With that Ben made a dash at our hero, bent on wringing his neck, or doing him some great injury:

He had been hit between the eyes before, and now he got it squarely on the end of the nose.

Then before he could recover himself he got another in the stomach.

This one doubled him up like a jack-knife, and he went down upon the floor with a groan of agony, the blood streaming from his nose and the wind completely knocked out of him.

The brother must have thought he was mortally injured, for when he spoke to him and received no answer, he drew his revolver.

"Put that up!" commanded Young Wild West in a ringing tone. "Put that shooter up, or I'll nail you to the wall with a bullet!"

The brother, who called himself Ben, saw the muzzle of a revolver staring him in the face, and as he had been unable

to lift his hand high enough to point at anything else but the floor, he let it drop.

He realized that he had made a big mistake.

"Now, then," said Wild, "do you want to take a hack at the game?"

"You are a wonder, you are," was the reply.

"Perhaps I am."

"What is your name?"

"Young Wild West."

"Well, all right, Young Wild West. I'm sorry me an' my brother bothered with you. I guess I don't want to take a hand in ther game—not to-day, anyhow."

"All right, then. Just take your brother out to the pump and wash him off. He will be all right in a minute or two."

There was a grin on the faces of Doc Melville and Bill Slack, the men who were pushing the stage route to Devil Creek.

They seemed to be much pleased at the way Young Wild West had handled the Bad Brothers.

And not a shot had been fired to subdue them.

Ben assisted his brother Bob to his feet and led him outside to the pump.

The man had recovered his wind by this time, and when he had washed the blood off his face he was all right, beyond a swollen nose and a slight lump on his forehead.

The Bad Brothers did not stop very long, but mounting their horses they rode over to the hotel that was kept by Bowery Bill and his wife, Faro Fan.

This hotel was called the Ram's Horn, an appropriate name, some said, because they did a crooked business there.

The proprietor was standing on the stoop when the brothers rode up and dismounted.

"Hello, Bén! Hello, Bob!" he called out. "So you thought you would run over an' see a feller, did yer?"

"Yes." And they quickly dismounted and shook him heartily by the hand.

"Quit Deadwood, hey?"

"Yes. You see, we have opened up a new line."

"Where to?"

"Oh, not many miles from here," answered Ben. "You'll know all about it later on. There's ten of us, an' me an' Bob are ther bosses of ther gang."

"So that's how it is, is it?"

"Yes. I s'pose you have got a room for us to stay in while we are in town?"

"You kin bet I have!" exclaimed Bowery Bill. "I never goes back on a friend, whether he has got any money or not."

"Well, we have got money to pay you, all right."

"Well, so long as you have got it, I'll take it. I ain't in business for my health any more than you are."

"Let's have ther best you have in ther house," and the brothers entered the barroom.

The drinks were poured out, and then the three men began to talk of old times when they were all in Deadwood.

"What become of Dandy Don—he come over here last fall to stop, I heard?" said Bob.

"Yes," was the retort. "He come over, but he didn't stay long."

"How was that?"

"Well, you see, he fought a duel on horseback with a young feller here, an' he got shot through the heart. He's buried on a little hill about half a mile from here."

"Ther feller what got away with Dandy Don must have been putty soon," observed Ben. "Who was he?"

"Young Wild West."

"What!" gasped the brothers, in the same breath.

"Have you met him?" queried the landlord of the Ram's Horn, with just the vestige of a smile on his face.



"Yes; we met him just before we come to your place."

"Then yer might know why it was that Dandy Don went under."

"Yes; I guess we know, and Bob shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, after the poor fellow got his billet I married his sister."

"What! You married Faro Fan?"

"Yes; an' she's makin' a model wife, too. She's settled right down to business, an' she kin run this place when I'm away to the queen's taste. There's nothing lacking about my wife, I kin tell you."

"Does Young Wild West come in here very often?" Ben asked, after a pause.

"No; he don't come in here once in a month, though we are good enough friends."

"Well, I don't bear him any love, but I must say that he's got ther most grit of any feller I ever met. An' he's only a boy, too."

"That's what."

The three had another drink, and then Ben said:

"I hear there is a stage route to open between this town an' Devil Creek next Saturday."

"Yes," answered Bowery Bill. "It will be a good thing, as more business will be brought into town. Not sayin' that there ain't enough to make it pay now, but there'll be a chance to make more money with strangers droppin' in all ther time."

"An' mebbe there'll be a chance for us an' our men to make a little money, too."

"What at?"

"You know what our business has been for the last year or two."

"Yes; but you want to be careful how you practise around these diggin's. You must look out for Young Wild West an' his gang. They are death to all people in that line. I don't know how many gangs they have broken up in ther past year."

"Oh, we won't be so very close to Weston," said Bob; "an' if Young Wild West takes ther trouble to come an' bother us he'll git filled with lead for his pains, that's all."

"As sure as guns he will!" exclaimed his brother.

"Well, if you are goin' to work on the road from here to Devil Creek you'll have something else to look out for. I heard to-day that ther pass they call Gauntlet Gulch is haunted."

"Yes; we heard something about that," and the brothers looked at each other rather uneasily.

Bowery Bill grew very much interested when he noticed this.

"Do you know anything about the ghost?" he asked.

"Nope! Neither of us ever seed such a thing as a ghost, an' we don't believe in 'em, anyhow."

Then they laughed.

The landlord of the Ram's Horn questioned them further, but they quickly changed the subject.

Pretty soon Faro Fan came into the barroom.

She was acquainted with the Bad Brothers, and gave them a cordial greeting.

"It's too bad that Don dropped out so sudden," Bob ventured.

"It was his own fault," replied the woman. "There is no one to blame but himself."

"You don't bear Young Wild West any grudge, then?"

"No; Don looked for it and he got it. Young Wild West was forced to shoot him. Right here I want to give you fellows a little advice, if you intend to hang out in Weston very long, and that is to let Young Wild West alone."

Bob pointed to his swollen nose and forehead.

"He done that for me less than half an hour ago, an' he only

used his fists, too," he remarked, in a tone that was full of bitterness.

"Well, take my advice and let him alone. If you don't you won't live very long."

## CHAPTER V.

### THE FATE OF THE STRANGER.

The Bad Brothers were very much impressed by what Faro Fan had said.

But they did not want to let her know that they were.

They had been friends of her brother, and had been known as the worst pair in all Deadwood, which was saying a whole lot.

Pretty soon Bowery Bill brought up the ghost subject again.

Then his wife became very much interested.

"I rather think that you fellows know something about this ghost that is being seen in Gauntlet Gulch," she observed, looking hard at the brothers.

"No; we don't," Ben replied. "Honest, we don't."

"It would seem that the ghost shows up to help you out in your business," spoke up Bowery Bill.

"Well, if it does that, we'll be much obliged to it. But one thing is certain, an' that is that we know nothin' about it."

"Well, then, if I was you, I'd be on the lookout for it."

"We are on the lookout for it. We've got some of our men huntin' for it now. When we go back about four o'clock we hope to know all about it. We've got a good lot of men under us, ain't we, Bob?"

"You kin bet yer boots we have!" was the reply. "They are all tried an' true, every one of them."

The Bad Brothers had plenty of money, and when dinner-time came they set down to the best in the house.

It was shortly after they had got up from the table that a stranger rode up to the door of the Ram's Horn and dismounted.

By his manner he appeared to be fresh from the East.

Ben and Bob sized him up critically and then glanced at each other significantly.

The stranger wore a heavy gold watch-chain, and they quite naturally came to the conclusion that the timepiece attached to it was worth considerable money.

And if a man could afford a gold watch and chain, he must be pretty well fixed.

As the two villains had brought their gang over from Deadwood to operate in the road agent's business between Devil Creek and Weston, they thought that they might as well begin work right in Weston by relieving the stranger of what he possessed.

They knew what sort of a man Bowery Bill was, and that he would allow them to do it in his place, provided that he got some sort of a share of the profits.

"I would like to get something to eat," said the man, as he walked up to the bar.

"Well, stranger, I reckon you couldn't have struck a better place," said Bowery Bill, speaking as pleasantly as he could.

"What do you want—a regular dinner, or a sandwich?"

"I'd like a regular dinner, if it is not too late."

"It is never too late in this house. We always make it a point to 'commodate our guests, no matter what time they come in."

"Good! I would like to have my horse fed and cared for, too. I have got a long journey ahead of me, and I want to get off as soon as possible."

The rascally landlord sent a man out to take care of the



horse, and then told his wife, who stood in the doorway, to get dinner for the gentleman.

"How far mought yer be goin'?" he then asked.

"I am bound for a place called Spicer, in the southern part of Wyoming, right near the Dakota border line. I've got two brothers out there, and I'm going to join them."

"Ah, that ain't so very far. You kin make it in two or three days, I reckon."

"That's what they told me over at Spondulicks. You see, I am a stranger in these parts, and I am not altogether used to the people's ways. Still, I have been treated very good so far."

"An' you will be, no matter where you go," spoke up one of the Bad Brothers. "We are rather rough in our ways out here, but we all try to be honest, for all that."

The stranger seemed pleased at this remark.

Little did he know that the speaker was already planning to rob him.

"You are from ther East, I reckon?" ventured Bowery Bill.

"Yes; from Buffalo in the State of New York. I sold out a good-paying business to come out here and join my brothers in the ranching business. They are making money hand over fist."

"I reckon you'll never see your brothers," the landlord thought, as he saw the exchange of glances between the listening villains.

Pretty soon Faro Fan called the stranger to dinner, and he went in and put away a fairly good meal.

Then he bought the best cigar the house afforded and sat down to wait until his horse finished his oats.

It was about two o'clock when he got ready to leave.

"Which direction do I take now?" he asked, as he got ready to mount.

The Bad Brothers were there, and in the act of mounting, as he asked the question.

"We are goin' about five miles in the direction you want to go," spoke up Bob. "You kin ride that far with us, if you want to."

"Thank you. I will be glad of the opportunity," was the retort, and the stranger seemed to be more than pleased at the suggestion.

There was just the vestige of a pitying smile on the face of Bowery Bill as the three rode away.

Then he walked inside.

"I reckon Ben and Bob will have to whack up with us ther next time they show up here," he remarked to his wife.

"Do you think the man had much money?" she asked, shrugging her shoulders as if she did not exactly like the idea of what was in the air.

"Much money! Well, I should reckon so. He had a bag full of twenty-dollar gold pieces and a roll of bills as thick as my arm. I seed 'em when he paid his bill. He's got a couple of thousand, if he's got a dollar."

"Well, I guess we won't see any of it. Bob and Ben will lie and say that he did not have enough to pay them for bothering with it."

"Yes; an' then I'll tell 'em I know a whole lot better. They won't fool me any, Fan."

"Well, it is a rather poor way to make money, anyhow. I don't mind fleecing men out of their money at gambling, but this highway robbery business is something I never did like."

"An' yet you have had lots to do with it, Fan."

"I know that; but I expect to have a great deal less to do with it in the future."

With that the woman shut the door and walked back into the kitchen, leaving Bowery Bill to his own reflections.

Meanwhile, let us follow the Bad Brothers and their intended victim.

Instead of taking him to the trail he should follow in order to reach the part of the country he was heading for, they took him along the road leading to Devil Creek.

But they did not intend to travel very far in his company.

At the first convenient spot a mile or so out of Weston they meant to slay and rob him.

Both were watching for a good place to commit the foul crime, and in less than ten minutes they found one.

"Do you see that precipice over there to ther left?"

"Yes," answered the unsuspecting stranger.

"If a feller was to fall down there it would be ther last of him," spoke up Bob, as he pushed his steed closer to the edge of the spot in question.

"I should say it would be," and the man shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, stranger, I reckon that's just where you'll go in less than two minutes!"

Then for the first time the stranger realized the terrible danger he was in.

The cold muzzles of two revolvers stared him in the face, and the looks that came from the eyes of the two villains were sufficient to make the cold chills run down his spinal column.

But he was not to suffer long.

Two sharp reports rang out almost simultaneously, and it was all over with him.

The stranger from Buffalo would never join his brothers on the ranch they were making so much money with.

Both villains dismounted as their victim sank to the ground, and then in a systematic way they went through his clothes.

The result was gratifying to them, for they realized more than they expected to, and then both laid hold and dragged the body to the edge of the precipice.

With a one, two, three! they tossed it over.

Ben then coolly picked up a switch and laid it on the horse of their victim.

With a bound the animal darted away to the left and was soon lost to view.

Then the heartless wretches divided the booty, and mounting, rode on in the direction of Devil Creek.

"I reckon we'll go right on to our quarters," said Ben. "If we go back to Weston, Bowery Bill will want a share of ther boodle. If he should ask us when we go there again, we'll tell him that we didn't git much more than a hundred dollars."

"That's it," chuckled Bob. "We'll tell him we didn't git only a little more'n a hundred, when we got somethin' like three thousand, an' a fine gold watch an' chain throwed in."

They rode until the mouth of Gauntlet Gulch suddenly showed up in front of them.

But instead of entering it, they turned abruptly to the right, and allowed their horses to walk slowly upon a smooth, rocky surface for a dozen yards.

They came to a string of thick bushes then, but the animals were forced through them and they soon came upon a trail that had not been long in existence.

This led them along parallel with the gulch at a distance of probably twenty yards from it.

Though the way ran up and down, it was only occasionally that they could catch a glimpse of the gulch below them.

In due time the Bad Brothers reached a point where a slope ran down into the gulch.

They were now within a short distance of the cave they had made their headquarters in.

They could have come through the gulch in quicker time and reached the cave that way, but they had only discovered that there was another way to get in and out that morning, and they thought it was really the safest way, since they were not apt to meet any one.



One of the villains gave the signal when they were close to the cave, and it was immediately answered from within.

Then a man stepped out into view and, recognizing them, led the way inside.

"You are back soon," observed the villain who had been left in charge in the absence of the two ruling spirits.

"Yes," answered Bob. "We didn't stay in Weston as long as we intended to. We learned what we wanted to, an' then come back."

They took care not to tell the men about killing and robbing the stranger, as they did not want to divide the spoils with them.

There is a saying that there is honor among thieves, but it was not so in this case.

There was nothing like honor about the Bad Brothers.

"When is ther stage-coach goin' ter commence goin' through?" one of the outlaws asked.

"Saturday," was the reply.

"Well, when do we begin business?"

"Monday afternoon when it comes through will be our formal opening," laughed Bob.

"Good!"

"That's what we are waitin' for."

"We'll make things hustle in Gauntlet Gulch while we stay here."

"You bet we will."

"Yer can't beat the Bad Brothers an' their gang."

These were some of the pleased expressions that greeted the ears of the brothers in crime.

"How about ther ghost that's botherin' us so much?" asked Ben after a pause.

"We've hunted all around here an' can't find out a thing," was the reply of the lieutenant in command. "I must say that I don't like to be around where spooks are."

"Well, if I draw a bead on the spook once I'll put an end to it mighty sudden, see if I don't!" and Ben acted as though he did not believe it was a ghost at all.

But the majority of them did.

The next couple of days the villains spent in hunting game and fixing up their headquarters.

It was not until Sunday night that the ghost appeared to them.

Ben kept his word and shot at it, but the heart-rending wail of the specter ended in a mocking laugh as it disappeared.

Some of the villains were for changing their quarters, but the Bad Brothers said no.

"We are goin' to stay right here an' do business; an' we are goin' to drive this ghost out, too."

Though they had been brought up in a very ignorant way, the brothers were not as superstitious as it might be supposed.

They had an idea that the ghost was a trick of some sort practised by some one in their line of business.

When they held up the stage-coach Monday night and got cheated out of their plunder by the ghost's interference, the Bad Brothers were in a great rage.

They could not understand it at all.

But they resolved to stay right there and solve the mystery, doing business whenever the opportunity offered.

He had sold all his horses, and said he had come over to pay his respects to Young Wild West and his friends.

"I guess I'll stay in town a week or so," he added. "That is, of course, if I kin git anything to do that will turn me in enough money to pay for my grub an' lodgin'."

"What do you want to work at?" Wild asked, knowing that the man was virtually asking him for a job.

"Anything that I kin do," was the reply.

"Very well. Wait a few minutes till our superintendent comes from the mine to his dinner. I'll ask him if there is room for a good man, and if there is you shall have the job."

"Thank you!"

At twelve o'clock Walter Jenkins, the superintendent, came along, and when our hero questioned him he said there was room for another man; so Turpin was hired then and there.

Wild was well satisfied that beyond the fact of his being a pretty good "blower," the broncho buster was all right.

Things went along pretty smoothly for the next few days.

Saturday the first trip over the new route between Weston and Devil Creek was made by the stage-coach.

It started from Weston, and was to come back the next Monday.

Sunday being left out, that would make it three round trips a week.

The stage was due at Weston about dark Monday, but it did not show up until some three or four hours later.

And the driver and passengers had a thrilling story to tell when they landed safely in Weston.

They had been held up by a band of outlaws in Gauntlet Gulch.

The villains soon got the best of them and had nearly completed their job of relieving the passengers of the money and valuables they had when a ghost visited the scene.

It was such an awful specter, and the groans and screams that filled the air in the gulch were so horrible that both the robbers and the stage-coach fled from the spot, the former going in one direction and the latter in the other.

Young Wild West and old man Murdock were standing in front of the supply store when the stage came in, the horses on a dead run.

They knew that something was wrong.

"She's three hours an' twenty minutes late," said the old man, looking at his big silver watch. "She oughter been here by half-past six."

"And by the way they came in, they have been hurrying, too," answered Wild, as he pressed forward with the crowd to learn what the trouble was.

The driver gave an account of it in an excited voice, and the seven passengers he had brought over bore him out in everything he said.

"Now you see," observed old man Murdock, shaking his head gravely, "it was a ghost that Lively Rick seen after all."

"Don't be so sure that it was a ghost," answered Wild, with a laugh. "There is no doubt that they all saw something, but—well, you all know what my opinion on ghosts is."

"Yes; you don't believe in 'em. But I do. I ain't so awful afraid of 'em, either, as I was brought up to believe that a ghost is ther spirit of a dead person, and a dead person can't hurt yer; it is ther livin' that kin do ther damage, an' not ther dead."

Wild smiled at the talk of the old man, but he was doing considerable thinking just then.

He was trying to imagine what motive any one could have to play ghost in Gauntlet Gulch.

Now that the thing had been seen and heard by others than Lively Rick, our hero was satisfied that there was some one playing a trick.

And he felt anxious to see the thing himself.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE GHOST HUNT BEGINS.

When Wild and Charlie went back to the office a little before noon they found Tom Turpin, the broncho buster, there.



"I guess I'll undertake to solve the mystery," he thought. "There are so many superstitious folks around this part of the country that the new road to Devil Creek will soon be abandoned, and the new stage route will go under in less than two weeks, if this ghost business ain't stopped. I will be in Gauntlet Gulch to-morrow night."

The news of the attack on the stage-coach by robbers, and the scoundrels being put to flight by the appearance of the ghost of the gulch, spread around like wildfire, and there was not a man, woman or child who did not know it that night in Weston.

There were lots of men who said if they had been there they would have riddled the thing with bullets, and then they guessed there would be an end to it; but the others shook their heads.

If the apparition could be seen through, as the story went, there would be no use shooting at it. It was a spirit, and that was all there was about it.

That was the way they looked at it.

"Jim," said Wild, the next morning at the breakfast table, "I am going to take a ride over to Gauntlet Gulch this evening. You can go with me if you want to."

"Go with you! Of course I want to. You don't think I am afraid, do you?"

"Well, no; I know better than that. I know you would stand up and fight Indians or renegades as long as there was a breath in you. But hunting ghosts might be different."

"Well, I will admit that the business is rather uncanny, but where you lead I will follow."

"Me, too," chimed in Jack Robedee. "If you let me go along I'll stick to you till ther last drop of blood is in my veins, ghosts or no ghosts!"

"All right, Jack, you ~~can~~ go along, too, then. Our book-keeper made the remark last night that he did not believe the apparition was a ghost, so I am going to ask him to go along. It may be that we will have a stiff fight on our hands before we get through with our ghost hunt; that is my opinion of it."

"How about Charlie; is he going?" asked Jim.

"Oh, he will go, of course," Wild replied. "He is rather afraid of ghosts, I think, but I know he is not afraid of men, and that makes him as good as any of us. He will go, just because the rest of us go."

The stage connected with the one from Spondulicks, and as the latter did not arrive until about eleven o'clock, it would be dark before the outfit got to the other end of Gauntlet Gulch.

Wild had this all figured out in his mind, and he wanted to be at the gulch when the stage came along.

Cheyenne Charlie was delighted to go along, he said, and when the time came for the start the party was made up of five, the fifth man being Rex Moore, the bookkeeper of the company.

Some one suggested that Wild ride his bucking broncho over to the gulch, but he laughed and said that Spitfire, his trusted stallion, would be the proper steed to ride on such a trip as that.

Our friends had taken pains not to let any one know where they were going, or what their mission was, and they rode out of town singly.

This was done on the advice of our hero.

He had an idea that the ghost might have a spy in Weston, but he did not say so.

Wild was the last to leave Weston, and when he did so he went by a roundabout way, so he would not be seen by any of the hangers-on about the hotels.

He overtook his four companions about a mile outside of the town.

They were waiting for him in a little grove of mountain pines well concealed from the road.

The stage got started a few minutes past one, after the passengers bound to the Creek had been given ample time to feed the inner man.

As Wild met his friends in the clump of pines he pulled out his watch and found that they were nearly two hours behind the stage.

But the outfit would move pretty slow, as there was a good load on the stage.

It was full of passengers, and the baggage was heavy.

Our hero figured on catching it in two hours.

"We will ride fast," he said. "If we fail to overtake the stage and pass it, we will be pretty close to it before it gets through the gulch."

The stage had not proceeded them many minutes, as they could tell by the freshness of the hoofprints of the mules that were hitched to it.

"They are making good time, I guess," said Charlie. "Looks as though the driver is anxious to git through before dark."

"Well, you don't blame him, do you?" spoke up Jack, shrugging his shoulders as he thought of the ghost.

"No; not much I don't blame him."

In some parts of the gulch it was almost as dark as night.

The irregular walls of rock reared themselves to such a height on either side as to almost effectually shut out the light of day.

Young Wild West was watching both sides of the road as he rode along, and so were his companions.

When about half-way through the narrow pass they halted.

There was quite a wide spot here, and the oddly shaped corners of rock projected in every conceivable direction.

It was quite dark now, though the sun had not yet gone down.

But it had descended far enough to shut out the light from that place.

"We will stop right here for a while," said Wild. "The stage has gone on, and I have missed my calculations on it, so we will take up a temporary headquarters here and begin the hunt for the ghost."

"That is the ticket," exclaimed Rex Moore, who seemed to be very anxious to solve the mystery.

"Charlie and I will go out on a little scout around here," Wild resumed. "The rest of you will stay in hiding here till we come back. Be sure and keep the horses out of sight of the road, so any one passing will not be able to see them."

"We will do that," answered Jim.

Wild and Charlie had just hitched their horses in a good hiding-place when the rumbling noise made by the wheels of a vehicle came to their ears.

"What's that?" whispered Jack.

"The stage-coach," answered Rex Moore.

"That can't be; we never passed it," spoke up Jim.

"Well, it sounds like it, anyhow," said Wild. "It is a stage-coach that is coming, as sure as we are standing here."

Leaving their horses in the darkness of the alcove they had halted in, all of them crept quickly to the side of the road.

They were just in time to see the outfit which had left two hours ahead of them coming along as fast as the four tired mules could go.

When and how had our five friends passed it on the road?

That was the question each one of them asked himself at that instant.

Wild cautioned them to be silent, so they crouched down and watched the stage-coach go past.

There was no mistake about it. The outfit was certainly that which had left Weston at half-past one.

There was the same old driver, and the plainman lying on



top, with his rifle ready to shoot down any one who tried to bar their way; the vehicle and the mules were the same, and there could be no mistake.

When the outfit had passed them and was out of sight around a bend in the wall, Wild arose to his feet.

"What do you think of that?" he asked.

"Ther blamed place is bewitched, that's what it is!" exclaimed Jack. "Why, I'll swear that I seen the fresh tracks of ther stage an' mules when we first come in ther gulch. There's spirits here, an' they are jugglin' us. It can't be any other way, 'cause how could we pass ther stage in a narrier place like this, an' not see or hear anything of it?"

Jack's words had great effect on Charlie and Jim.

Though Wild and Moore were as unable to account for what had happened as they were, they said nothing.

But they knew only too well that spirits or anything supernatural had nothing to do with their getting ahead of the stage without being aware of it.

It was a puzzle, and they felt just in the humor to try and solve it.

"Well," said Wild, in his easy way, "there must be two branches of this gulch. We came through one and the stage-coach the other. That is how we got ahead of them and did not know it."

"Do you really think that, Wild?" asked Jim.

"I certainly do," was the reply.

"Well, it might have been that way."

"How else can it be accounted for?"

"In a haunted place, like this, things can't be accounted for," observed Robedee, shaking his head solemnly.

"Well, never mind. Say no more about it just now. I promise you that I will make it plain to you how it was that we came to get to this part of the gulch without knowing that we passed the stage. I may do it in less than an hour, and it may take me a week; but I will do it. Just remember what I say, now. I am also going to solve this mystery of the ghost, too, and I will prove what a humbug the whole thing is. Come, Charlie, I want you to go with me; and I want you to imagine that you are looking for the hidden camp of a band of Indians or white outlaws. Don't get to thinking about a ghost, and if you should happen to see one, just take a good look at it, so you will be sure to know it when you see it again."

"All right," Charlie responded, though if Wild could have seen his face plainly he would have noticed that it was rather pale.

But the scout was not one of the sort to give in. He would go with Young Wild West anywhere, and he would do as he told him, no matter if a dozen ghosts and goblins sprang up before him.

But this did not alter the fact that he believed in supernatural things.

"I wish I had the grit Wild's got," he thought.

After again instructing Jim and the rest to stay right there till he and Charlie came back, Wild led the way out to the road.

There was a ledge on the opposite side which he could just reach, and before the scout knew what he was up to, the boy had seized it and swung himself upon it.

As soon as Wild got upon his feet he leaned over and assisted Charlie to get up.

It was now getting so dark that they could scarcely see each other.

But Wild knew where he was going, as he had noticed a series of ledges, the one leading to the other, before it had got so dark.

He had also noticed evidences of caves being up there.

"Keep your nerves now," he whispered to Charlie. "Our ghost hunt has begun in earnest."

## CHAPTER VII.

## WILD AND CHARLIE ARE CAPTURED.

Fearlessly and with scarcely any noise, Young Wild West and Cheyenne Charlie crept along the ledge.

Our hero had the place well pictured in his mind, and when he had crawled probably a dozen yards and reached a spot where the ledge narrowed down to almost nothing, he came to a stop and gave a nod of satisfaction.

Then he slowly reached upward and found just what he expected—another ledge about five feet above.

When he crawled upon this Charlie unhesitatingly followed him.

For probably ten feet they moved along the second ledge, and then they came to a third that projected out above them.

It seemed as though they were ascending a huge, natural stairway.

But this third one was the last they were to mount just then, for it widened out and ran toward a cave.

Young Wild West knew this perfectly well, and he now moved with great caution.

Cheyenne Charlie could hardly see the wisdom of this, but he said nothing and followed his leader's example.

The truth of it was that Charlie was looking for the ghost to appear at any moment, and he thought that no matter how cautious they might proceed it would make no difference to the apparition.

And he was about right, as far as this went, for they had not crept more than a dozen feet along the ledge when an unearthly scream split the still air and a cold shiver ran down his spinal column.

Instinctively the scout grasped Wild by the sleeve.

"Drop flat to the ground!" came the whispered command from the boy.

Down they went, and as they did so a pale, bluish light infused that portion of the gulch that was almost immediately below them.

The next instant the vapory figure of a woman appeared at a distance of perhaps three feet from the ground.

Wild, who had recovered from his surprise almost instantly, cautioned his companion to be perfectly quiet.

"Take a good look at the thing," he said in a low whisper. "Make sure while it lasts that it is a real ghost you are looking at."

"It is real, all right enough!" was the reply in an awesome whisper.

"Don't get that in your head, not for a single instant. Ah!"

Again that agonized scream rang out, and as it did Wild strove to locate the spot where it came from.

As near as he could come to it, it came from a point a little to the right and above them.

The vapory figure, which was fully ten feet in height, now began to float toward the spot where they had left their companions.

Suddenly a rifle shot rang out, showing that Jim or one of the others had fired at the apparition.

The very instant the report sounded the thing vanished, and then a mocking laugh rang out, ending in a long-drawn wail of despair.

"How about that laugh?" asked our hero. "Wasn't it human?"

"Yes."

"And the ghost?"

"That wasn't human."

"No. But it was an optical illusion caused by human beings. I'll wager."



"Maybe it was."

"I am sure it was. Now come on. It is not likely the thing will appear again very soon. We must find the men who are working this trick."

He started along the ledge again and Charlie followed close at his heels.

In a few seconds they were at the mouth of a cave.

It appeared to be a rather small one, and while Wild was considering the advisability of crawling into it he detected a sound quite near.

It sounded as though a body were moving.

He had his revolver ready for instant use, and he touched his companion to make him be on the alert for danger.

The next instant a startling thing occurred.

A pair of hands seized Wild by the wrists and gave him a quick pull forward into the cave.

Then before Cheyenne Charlie could imagine what had happened he was treated in a similar manner.

The ghost hunters had been caught napping, in spite of the precautions of Young Wild West.

The revolver was wrenched from his hand so quickly that Wild was completely taken at a disadvantage.

And so it was with Charlie.

It seemed that there were half a dozen men who had been waiting for them to come to the mouth of the cave for the express purpose of being captured.

Brawny hands were over their mouths to keep them from crying out, and they were held with a grip of steel.

In a very short space of time they were bound and gagged, and then their captors dragged them back through the darkness.

Young Wild West felt deeply mortified as the result of his venturesome search.

But never once did he feel alarmed over the outcome of it.

Just who his captors were he had no idea, and already he began to figure on how he could make his escape from them.

When the two captives had been dragged probably twenty yards they were lifted to their feet, and a gruff voice said:

"Now, then, you sneakin' coyotes, you've got ter walk ther rest of ther way!"

Our hero gave a start.

He recognized the voice as belonging to one of the Bad Brothers.

He would have given a defiant reply if he had not been gagged, but made up his mind when he got a chance he would talk to the villains.

There was nothing for our friends to do but go along in a peaceful manner.

They well knew that they would gain nothing by being obstinate.

As soon as they got upon their feet some one struck a light.

Wild looked around him as soon as the glare permitted him to see well, and he saw that there were five men in the gang.

One of them was lighting a lantern and the other four had hold of the captives.

All of them wore masks on their faces, so it was impossible to tell whether he had ever seen them before or not.

But one thing he was satisfied of, and that was that one of the villains was either Ben or Bob, of the Bad Brothers.

Our hero never made a mistake in a voice, and he argued to himself that if one of them was there it was quite likely the other was, too.

As soon as the lantern was lighted and the globe adjusted to it, the five men started through a deep, narrow cut, pulling their prisoners along with them.

In about two minutes they came to a big cave, the opening

of which was large enough for two or three horsemen to pass through abreast.

As Wild and Charlie were dragged into this they saw that there was a pretty bright light somewhere in the rear of the place.

The next minute they rounded a bend and went through a narrow passage of a few feet in length and came out into a broad cave that was lighted by lanterns.

There were both men and horses in the cave, and when our friends were marched up to a wall of rock and pressed back against it, they looked around and counted ten men all told, including those who had brought them in, and a dozen horses.

That the band had not long made the cave its headquarters was plainly evident, for there was little or nothing in it in the way of equipments, any more than a few blankets and cooking utensils that any camp on the mountain would have been provided with.

Like the men who had made the capture, those who had remained in the cave wore black masks.

At a word from one of them the gags were removed from the mouths of the captives.

"I am glad you are giving us a chance to say something," said Wild, the instant he could use his tongue. "I would like to ask you what you intend to do with us?"

"Oh, we jest caught you to have a little fun with you," replied the fellow whom our hero had taken to be one of the Bad Brothers. "We will show you soon enough. What business had you to come prowling around our camp ther way you did? We seen yer, an' so we thought we had better nail fast to yer."

"We were looking for the ghost, not for your camp."

"Yes, I reckon you was lookin' for ther ghost!" and the man broke into a derisive laugh, being joined by his masked companions.

"That was one reason why we caught yer. We wanted to find out who ther ghost was," he added. "An' I guess we have now. You have been working quite a fine scheme, Young Wild West. I didn't think it was you an' your gang who was workin' ther ghost trick, but we was all mighty sure that it was some one."

This remark puzzled Wild just a little bit.

The tone of the man's voice implied that he was speaking the truth, and if that was the case these ten men knew nothing about the weird apparition, any more than that they had seen it.

"I want you to understand that neither I nor my friends know anything about the ghost of Gauntlet Gulch. We came here for the purpose of seeing it to-night."

"Yes; I reckon you did." And again a hoarse peal of derisive laughter rang out.

"My men all feel a little easier now," went on the spokesman of the band. "First off they thought it was a spirit, or somethin', but since they know that it was Young Wild West tryin' ter work a scheme to scare ther people away from ther gulch, so's he kin git a chance to dig out ther nuggets an' dust that it is full of, they feel mighty easy. It ain't no ghost at all, an' they know it."

"Your talk sounds all right, I must admit," Wild answered. "Which of the Bad Brothers are you, Ben or Bob?"

As this question came to their ears, the masked men looked at one another uneasily.

"Well, I'm Bob," exclaimed the fellow, defiantly, after a rather lengthy pause.

"An' I'm Ben," said the man standing the nearest to him.

"I was pretty sure of that. Which of you is the leader of this gang?"

"Both of us," replied Bob, quickly. "Ain't that right, boys?"



"That is right," came from all hands almost in the same breath.

"Well, since you seem to be of the opinion that we are the ones who are causing the ghost to appear, I want to inform you that you are badly mistaken. To-night is the first time I ever saw the apparition, though I heard of it. We came over for the express purpose of finding out something about it. We had no idea that we were going to run across a band of men who are afraid to show their faces."

"That's right, every word of it," added Cheyenne Charlie.

"Well, I guess it don't make much difference whether it is or not," observed the brother called Ben. "You have got to die, anyhow!"

"That's right enough," chimed in Bob.

"We have all got to die," observed Wild calmly.

"Yes; but not right away before daylight, like you have."

"You may change your minds and allow us to live a little longer than that."

"Not much we won't change our minds. Will we, boys?"

"No, no," came the unanimous response.

"You appear to be a brave lot of men," went on our hero, not the least bit abashed. "I'll make a proposition to you, and I dare you to agree to it."

"What is ther proposition?" queried Bob.

"Untie us and give us our arms. Then the ten of you go over there near the entrance of the cave. Then, when I give the word, all of us will begin to shoot."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the men in chorus.

"Are you afraid to try it?" spoke up Charlie.

"That ought to be a sure way of making us die before morn-ing," added Young Wild West, speaking as though he was simply proposing a friendly game of cards.

"Yes; it ought to be, an' would be, sure. But you don't think we are fools, do you? Wouldn't some of us be likely to go under, too?"

"I feel almost certain that every man of you who stood his ground would go under!" exclaimed Young Wild West, in a voice that fully implied that he meant what he said.

"Well, we won't accept your proposition, then."

"Well, you make one, then."

"I have said what would happen to you. You have got to die between now and daylight. We will settle on a way to fix you putty soon. Boys, git that jug of whisky, an' we will all take a drink."

The jug was produced at once.

Then a couple of tin cups were fished from their trappings and the masked men proceeded to drink the whisky.

Round after round was indulged in, and soon the jug was emptied.

Our two friends were forced to stand there with their backs against the rock while this was taking place, as there was no possible chance for them to reach the opening of the cave.

With their hands tied behind them securely, it would have been folly for them to have attempted to run away, anyhow.

It would have been a question of only a few seconds before they would have been overtaken and shot by the masked villains.

Strange as it may seem, neither of them felt that he was in any great danger.

Wild was confident that the two brothers were cowards, and he had an idea that he could bluff them off until help arrived.

He knew Jim Dart too well to think that he would remain idle very long after they failed to show up in a reasonable time.

And the men were novices, it seemed, in the business they had started in, for they made no attempt at all to guard the entrance of the cave.

Probably the reason for this was because they did not know

that their captives had friends waiting for them in the gulch below.

The Bad Brothers had discovered Wild and Charlie crawling along on the ledge soon after the stage-coach had passed, and as they had not reached their point of observation in time to see the five ride in and take their positions behind the rocks, they were not aware that there were any more there.

After the shadowy form had appeared they made a capture, and now they were at a loss how to dispose of them.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### JIM DART MAKES A BAD MISTAKE.

When the apparition appeared in the gulch so close to them, Jack Robedee nearly had a fit, and Jim Dart was about as much frightened as he had ever been in his whole life before.

Rex Moore was the coolest of the trio.

"It is a make-believe ghost," he whispered, "and a very clever trick."

Robedee could not see it that way.

"No!" he replied. "You kin see the grave-clothes on it. It is ther spirit of some murdered woman!"

"If it is a trick it is a mighty good one," Jim observed.

Then he leveled his rifle full at the figure and pressed the trigger.

As the report rang out a wild shriek came to their ears, and the grewsome object disappeared.

"You've shot it!" groaned Jack. "Now look out for danger!"

"Nonsense!" answered Moore. "It will not appear right away again. Those who are manipulating it will be a little more careful now. See if they don't. Jim, it was a good shot, but you have let them know that we have got our eyes open."

Five minutes passed and they neither saw nor heard any more of the ghost.

Jim had regained his composure again, and he was wondering what had become of Wild and Charlie.

Like Wild, he had noted the series of ledges on the side of the gulch, and he had also noted the fact that the two had made for them when they disappeared in the darkness.

He took it for granted that the ghost had paid a visit to that particular spot to scare them—not Wild and Charlie, who must have been a considerable distance away when it showed up.

But he reasoned that they must have seen it, and he wondered if they had learned anything more about it than they had from the ground below.

When another five minutes had piled upon the first he began to grow decidedly uneasy.

It struck him that it was time the two came back.

If it had not been that the apparition had showed up just after they left, perhaps he would not have thought so.

The three waited in silence.

As the minutes flitted by Jim grew more anxious than ever.

Not a sound could he hear that would indicate that Wild and Charlie were anywhere in the vicinity.

When twenty minutes had elapsed Jim arose to his feet.

"Wild told us to stay here until he came back," he said.

"But I am going to make a little scout to see if I can learn what has become of him. It may be that something has happened to him and Charlie, and in that case we might keep on waiting for them to get back."

Neither Jack nor Moore tried to dissuade him, so without any further hesitation the young fellow started to find what had become of their missing friends.



He crept cautiously along in the direction he had seen them take, and soon came to the first ledge.

It was but the work of an instant for him to draw himself upon it, and then he started to make his way along it.

But he went the wrong way, and soon brought up against a perpendicular wall.

"I'll try the other way," he muttered, when he found that it was impossible to proceed any further in that direction.

Jim moved very cautiously, keeping his revolver ready for instant use.

He soon reached the point where he could go up higher, and up he went.

Luck was with him, it seemed, for he soon struck the upper ledge, and began crawling along it exactly as Wild and Charlie had done, though he was not really sure that they had gone that way.

There might be another route to climb the cliff for aught he knew.

It was too dark for him to see his way.

On he went, not making any noise, and pausing every now and then to listen.

Pretty soon he reached the small opening that led along the passage to the cave occupied by the masked men.

As the boy bent down and thrust his head in this he heard the faint sounds of laughter in the distance.

"Ah!" he exclaimed. "So I am to be rewarded, after all, am I? That laughing is not made by Wild or Charlie; neither is it made by ghosts or goblins. It strikes me that something must have happened to them. Well, I am going through here and see what I can find out."

When he had gone a little further he could hear the low hum of voices and an occasional burst of laughter more plainly.

"If I am not mistaken there is a drunken crowd close by," he muttered. "Now, the question is, are they friends or foes? It may be that Wild and Charlie are with them in friendship, or it may be that they have been caught napping and are prisoners among them. Well, I am going to find out. That is what I set out for."

Jim no longer had any fear of ghosts or spooks.

He had heard human voices, and that was sufficient to spur him on to the work ahead of him.

If it came to a fight he was bound to make a good showing, and he was not the least bit afraid that he was not able to take care of himself, provided he had half a show.

Once more he crept forward.

In less than a minute he caught a faint gleam of light in the distance.

Jim gave a satisfied nod.

Then keeping well in the shadow, he crept boldly forward. The next moment he had reached a point where he could look into a cave that was lighted by lanterns.

Two yards more and he could see men in the cave.

But that was not all he saw.

Standing with their backs to a wall of rock were Young Wild West and Cheyenne Charlie.

"Ah!" muttered Jim, "I thought something had happened to them. Captives, by Jove!"

Then the boy began to figure on a way to release his friends.

He took note of the fact that the men in the cave were quite tipsy.

Some of them were lying idly about and the others were playing cards.

But all the faces he saw were covered with black masks.

Jim thought for several seconds and then shook his head.

"If I open fire on them I couldn't drop them all," he muttered. "I must do something different from that. Ah, I have it! I'll go back and get Jack and Moore to help me. We can

then rush in on the villains and take them by surprise and soon release Wild and Charlie. They are safe enough for a while yet, by the appearance of things."

He knew that he could get back to the gulch in less than two minutes, so he set out at once.

As soon as he got well away from the light he went along at a much faster pace than he had come.

When he at length dropped down to the ground in the bottom of the gulch he gave just the vestige of a whistle.

This was promptly answered by Jack, who well knew the signal Jim was in the habit of giving on such occasions.

Then the young scout at once went over to the temporary headquarters behind the rocks.

"What's up?" asked Jack.

"A good deal. I want you and Rex to go with me right away. We haven't a minute to lose!"

"Did you see anything of Wild and Charlie?"

"Yes."

"Where are they?"

"Up there in a cave a little bit back from the cliff. They are the prisoners of about a dozen masked men."

"What!" gasped Jack and Moore in unison.

"That is right. I saw them quite plainly, but thought I had better come back and get you fellows to help get them out of the trouble they are in. Our horses will be all right here, I guess. The ghost won't bother us, I guess."

"I hope not," said Jack, with a shrug of his shoulders.

Without any further words Jim led the way across the gulch to the ledge.

He got upon it and the others followed.

All three of them had their rifles with them, but they kept them slung over their shoulders and carried their revolvers in their hands.

As Jim was going over the same ground he had covered but a few minutes before, he made pretty good time.

Our three friends moved very cautiously, though, for they did not know what might be in store for them.

In a little while Jim came to a halt.

He was quite sure that he had reached the spot where he had first seen the glimmer of light from the cave.

But there was naught but Stygian darkness now to confront them.

This fact puzzled the boy not a little, and he came to the conclusion that he must have made a mistake.

He said nothing, however, and moved ahead a few yards further.

According to his reckoning the mouth of the cave could not be over twenty feet distant now.

He looked up and saw the stars glimmering far above his head, the same as he had seen them on his first trip to the place.

But there was no sign of a cave anywhere around.

"I must have come the wrong way!" he whispered to his companions, "and yet I would be willing to swear that I am right. The cave I saw Wild and Charlie in ought to be within twenty feet of us. Come on! We will go ahead, anyway!"

They had just started to move forward again when a light suddenly flashed in their eyes, and blinking like so many owls, they saw the muzzles of half a dozen rifles staring them in the face.

"Hands up, or you are dead men!" came the command in a hoarse voice.

Then our three friends saw that the rifles were backed by six masked figures.

There was no use of making a fight for their lives.

Death would come to them quickly if they dared disobey, so reluctantly they complied with the command.

"Sensible people, I must say," observed one of the men.



"You don't want to die in such a hurry, I see. Now, then, boys, a couple of you jest tie them up. We are in great luck to-night. I'm thinkin' that ther next thing we will catch will be ther ghost himself!"

Jim Dart now realized that he had made the mistake of his life in going away from the cave to get Jack and Moore to help him rescue Wild and Charlie.

But it was too late now.

Jim had not been mistaken in his calculations of the place where the cave was.

The lights had been put out, and that was why he had been puzzled.

Just as they were disarmed and bound with strong cords that awful yell broke upon their ears again.

The ghost of Gauntlet Gulch was abroad for the second time that night.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE GHOST DOES OUR FRIENDS A GOOD TURN.

As the minutes flitted by Young Wild West and Cheyenne Charlie began to grow decidedly anxious.

The masked men began to ignore them entirely and refused to pay any attention to them when they spoke.

But the situation did not remain this way more than twenty minutes or so, for it suddenly occurred to one of the leaders of the gang that there was no one guarding the mouth of the cave.

A man was ordered to do this at once.

This must have been at the very moment when Jim Dart turned to go back and get the help of Jack and Rex Moore to rescue the captives, for the fellow had no sooner reached the mouth of the cave when his ears caught the sound of retreating footsteps.

It so happened that this particular villain was one of the most shrewd of the entire gang of ten, and he acted on the first thought that came to his mind and followed in the direction he had heard the sounds.

The result was that he was lying flat on the highest ledge, right over the gulch, when Jim reached his waiting companions and told them of his discovery.

As soon as he was certain that they were coming to the cave to try and rescue the captive he hastened back and apprised his companions of what was in the wind.

Wild and Charlie listened to what he said when he came back with anything but a cheerful feeling.

The scout felt that it was all up with them, and the look he cast at the young prince of the saddle showed it only too plainly.

The first thing the Bad Brothers ordered was to gag the prisoners; they would then be unable to warn their friends.

Then all the lanterns but one were extinguished, and the entire ten men moved over to the mouth of the cave.

They had made their preparations quickly, and they were none too soon at that.

When the lantern flashed and the three were made prisoners a groan came from Cheyenne Charlie.

When that wild shriek came vibrating through the cave Wild and Charlie gave a simultaneous start.

To the one it gave hope; to the other it lent fear.

That the masked men really did not know who had caused the shriek was now plainly evident, for they came into the rear of the cave, dragging their three latest captives with them in helter-skelter fashion.

A deathly silence followed the shriek for the space of thirty seconds.

Then it rang out with piercing distinctness, right in the cave, it seemed.

It had not died out when a pale blue light shone at the entrance, then a white-robed figure came gliding toward the masked villains and their prisoners.

The apparition presented a gigantic woman.

The hideous form was followed by a strange, rumbling sound, though its feet did not touch the floor.

This was more than the masked men could stand.

One of the bolder ones, however, opened fire on the thing with his revolver, but only a hollow, mocking laugh was heard.

Then all of a sudden a sputtering ball of fire seemed to shoot from the mouth of the specter and fall right among the villains, who were now crouching in the farthest corner of the cave.

A series of sharp explosions rang out, and then the specter vanished.

Then the masked men fled from the cave as fast as their trembling limbs would carry them.

It was now as dark as pitch in the underground place, for by some strange reason, the light from the single lantern had become extinguished.

The next thing that Wild knew some one severed his bonds.

He did not make a move, but waited until his hands were free, and then took the improvised gag from his mouth.

"Thank you," he said in a whisper.

There was no reply, so he turned his attention to Charlie who had been standing next to him.

Much to his satisfaction, he found that his bonds had been severed, too.

But the scout had been so much overcome by the appearance of the ghost that he had not recovered, and stood there motionless as a statue.

"Come, boys," exclaimed the young prince of the saddle calmly. "We must get out of this."

"That's right," whispered the voice of Rex Moore. "The ghost has proved to be our friend, so there is no need of our being afraid of it."

"Are your hands free?" asked our hero.

"Yes."

"How about Jim and Jack?"

"I am loosening them now with the knife that was placed in my hand a moment ago. There! Now we are all right."

Just then that strange, supernatural shriek rang out again. But it was outside the cave this time, so the more superstitious of our friends did not mind it so much.

"The ghost is chasing our captors," said Wild. "Well, I am going to strike a match. I saw where they put our weapons, and we may need them, I think."

He did strike the match without any further hesitation, and as the light shone in the cave he saw the weapons.

They were those that had been taken from Charlie and himself, and he quickly picked them up.

Those of the other three lay where they had been seized and bound, as the ghost had frightened the outlaws away from the spot too quick for them to pick them up.

"Now let the ten masked men come!" cried Young Wild West. "We will soon show them how five can make the bite the dust. The Bad Brothers are marked men from this time out, and woe to them when I set eyes on them the next time!"

He said this in a loud voice that echoed through the cave and among the rocks, so that if there were any of the villains within hearing they would know what to expect from him.

But no answering reply came, and after listening for the space of a minute, our five friends started to make their way back into the gulch.



They reached it in short order without meeting or hearing anything of a human being.

Their horses were just as they had left them, and without a suggestion from any one, they mounted.

Jack Robedee headed his horse for home, and the rest followed suit.

Rex Moore was the first to break the silence as they rode along through the gulch.

"A rather peculiar state of affairs, is it not?" he said to our hero.

"Yes," was the reply.

"I must say that getting caught like we did made me feel sick," spoke up Jim.

"Same with all of us, I reckon," retorted Charlie.

"Yes; it is the first time that I have been nipped in that way in a long time," observed Wild.

"It's what we git for goin' ghost huntin'," said Robedee, who was still of the opinion that it was a real ghost they had seen twice that night.

"Do you really think that was what caused our bad luck?" Wild asked him.

"Yes; I certainly do."

"Well, what caused our good luck, then?"

"The ghost, of course. Ther blamed spook got us in trouble from ther fact that we tried to find out what made it appear, an' then it took pity on us an' scared ther masked men away an' cut us loose."

Wild laughed, and was just about to argue the question further, when the noise made by a rapidly approaching horse came to their ears.

## CHAPTER X.

### WILD GETS ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

Whoever it was that was riding so fast was coming from the place they had just left, and as there was no telling whether it might be a friend or foe, Young Wild West gave the command to halt.

Then he wheeled his horse around and, revolver in hand, waited for the rider to appear.

But the next instant the hoof-beats ceased as if by magic.

"Another spook!" cried Jack, when they had waited more than long enough for the horseman to appear, and without hearing another sound. "Come on! Let's get out of this deannny place!"

He voiced the sentiments of the majority, so Wild said nothing, but rode along with the rest.

In a little while they were out of the gulch, and then it was that Jack Robedee breathed a sigh of relief.

And Charlie and Jim were equally as glad.

They rode along at an easy pace for about a mile, and then they suddenly came upon a horseman, who was going the same way as they.

It was no other than Tom Turpin, the broncho buster.

"Where have you been?" asked Wild in surprise.

"Ghost huntin'," was the reply.

"Did you find any?"

"No. I was too late, I guess. I only got to ther gulch about an hour ago. Was you fellers there?"

"Yes; we just came from the gulch."

"So did I."

"Not very recently?"

"Yes; five minutes ago."

Their five friends looked at one another.

Our hero was sorely puzzled for a minute or two.

Then he thought of how they had passed the stage-coach that evening without knowing it.

"There are two ways through that gulch," he said, after a pause. "At least, there are two ways to go through it for a short distance. Tom Turpin, we heard you coming behind us a short time before we reached the end of the gulch. But you did not pass us, and yet we have overtaken you. Quite a mystery, is it not?"

"I guess it is," was the rejoinder.

"Well, if you are going home we will ride along together. Turpin, you ride along with me. I want to talk with you."

Charlie and Jack rode on ahead; then came Jim and Moore, while our hero and Turpin kept well in the rear.

"See here, my friend," said Wild, suddenly. "I want to ask you a question."

"Go ahead," was the reply.

"What do you know about the ghost of Gauntlet Gulch?"

"Nothin'."

"Tom Turpin, I am satisfied that you are lying to me."

"Me? No!"

"But you are. You know something about that ghost business—I am sure of it."

"There's no ghost there, as far as I know," was the evasive answer.

"But that unearthly screeching and the specter of a gigantic woman—you know something about them."

"See here, Young Wild West, if you had a secret locked up in your breast, an' it was worth more than a million dollars to you if you didn't tell it, would you tell it?"

"No," answered our hero, promptly. "Don't tell me anything. But, Tom Turpin, I am going to watch you—aye, I am going to follow you!"

"Well, if you do, don't say anything to any one else till ther proper time comes. I can't help it if you foller me; an', come ter think of it, ther grit you've got will pull me out of my trouble all right, hanged if it won't."

Young Wild West now had an entirely different opinion of the broncho buster.

Not that he thought any the less of him, but there was a mystery about him that he had not supposed could exist about such a simple-minded personage.

It was late in the night when they reached home.

Jack Robedee was satisfied to let the ghost of Gauntlet Gulch remain a mystery forever.

And so were Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart, for that matter.

In spite of what he had experienced that night, Wild slept well.

After breakfast he took a walk around the mine alone.

He soon came upon Tom Turpin, who was working hard as a laborer.

This seemed quite odd to him, taking into consideration what the man had said the night before about a million dollars being at stake.

Then, again, the man must have had a goodly sum of money about him, as he had sold his horses at a fair price.

After he had watched him a while Wild called him from his work.

"I want to send you on an errand," he said.

"All right, sir," replied Turpin, respectfully.

"I don't want you to go till after dinner, but I thought I would speak to you now. About one o'clock come to the house, with your horse ready to go."

"All right, sir."

The man seemed to be pleased at the idea of going on an errand for Young Wild West.

Our hero then left him at his work and went over to the office, where he found the rest of the company.



They were talking about the ghost of the gulch when he came in, and when he heard them a smile broke over his face.

Turning to Cheyenne, Wild said:

"I am going down to the Ram's Horn hotel for a little while. Do you want to go along?"

"Yes," was the quick reply. "What's up?"

"Nothing! I just thought of going there this very minute."

This was a fact, as the boy was struck with the notion all of a sudden.

Charlie arose from his desk, and then the two left the office without any further words.

The two soon reached the Ram's Horn.

Bowery Bill and his wife were on the stoop when they came up.

A strange horseman had dismounted and was talking to them.

There was something very familiar about the man, and Wild tried hard to think where he had seen him before.

He wore a full beard of a dirty brick color and talked with an Irish accent.

That is, what little they heard him say was spoken that way.

Bowery Bill shook hands with Wild and Charlie when they followed the stranger into the barroom.

The landlord had just a faint look of uneasiness upon his face, Wild thought, and he wondered why.

"Let me introduce you to my friend Pat McCoy," he said. "I used to know him when I was in Deadwood."

The bearded stranger put out his hand, and as our hero took it he realized where he had seen that coarse, scraggy beard before.

It had been partly covered by a black mask, and he had seen it the night before in the outlaws' cave near Gauntlet Gulch.

There was no mistaking the man now.

Acting on a sudden impulse, Wild said:

"How are the Bad Brothers after what happened last night?"

The man gave a start.

Then as quick as a flash he whipped out a revolver and fired.

But Young Wild West was too quick for him, and leaped aside in time to escape the bullet, which passed out through the doorway and hit the horse the man had ridden.

Before the scoundrel could again press the trigger Wild's revolver spoke and he dropped to the floor with a bullet through his heart.

Bowery Bill turned as pale as a ghost.

"What are you doing, Wild?" he gasped. "That man was all right."

"He may have been all right once upon a time," was the calm reply. "Now, then, I want to give you a little advice. Be careful what kind of friends you have to come and see you. The first thing you know you will be given twenty-four hours' notice to leave the town, Mr. Bowery Bill! Because I asked that fellow how the Bad Brothers were he shot at me. You shouldn't have such friends as that, for they are no good."

"I guess you are right," was the reply. "Well, if I have made a mistake in him, I am sorry for it. I am glad you got out of the way of his bullet in time."

"Yes; I suppose you are."

Wild laughed as though he doubted the assertion, but Bowery Bill did not seem to notice it.

The shooting attracted a number of men to the place, and as soon as it got noised about that Wild had shot a man who had tried to drop him without giving him any warning, a cheer went up for Young Wild West, the champion deadshot of the West.

"It seems that I came over here to the Ram's Horn just on purpose to shoot one of the gang who had us in their clutches last night," our hero remarked, as he walked over to the post-office with the scout.

"It does seem so," was the retort.

"Well, something told me to go there, and so I went."

Wild lingered at the post-office a while and talked to Arietta; then he went home.

Punctual at one o'clock Tom Turpin rode up, ready to go on the errand, and Wild gave him a note to deliver to Lively Rick at Devil Creek, with instructions for him to get back with a reply before morning.

## CHAPTER XI.

### CONCLUSION.

Tom Turpin had not been gone more than five minutes when Young Wild West went out to the stable and saddled his horse.

He mounted and rode off on the trail of the man without saying a word to his friends.

Of course they saw him go, but they did not even hail him, knowing well that if he wanted them to know his business he would have told them.

Wild did not attempt to overtake Turpin, but simply rode at an easy pace.

Pretty close to the canyon he met the stage-coach coming over. The manager had changed the time-table, so it would not pass through the gulch after dark.

By inquiring of the driver he learned that Turpin was but half a mile ahead of him, so he knew just how fast to proceed.

As soon as he entered the gulch Young Wild West became very attentive, both with eyes and ears.

He now forced the spirited sorrel to come down to a walk.

At the end of ten minutes an exclamation of satisfaction came from his lips and he dismounted.

If his eyes had not deceived him he had seen a solid wall of rock move slightly.

It was at a point where the trail through the gulch turned sharply to the left.

Revolver in hand, the boy approached that rock.

He placed his hand upon it, and found it to be painted canvas, and nothing more!

"Ah!" he muttered. "It looks as though I will be able to solve the mystery without the aid of Tom Turpin. So this is how people can pass one another without knowing it!"

It was all plain to him now.

There were two branches that led through the gulch, and sometimes one opening would be covered by the canvas, and then the other.

All that was necessary was that some one should be there to make the change.

Wild scrutinized the canvas carefully, and going to one of the extreme ends, turned it over and found a rope hitched to a tree behind it.

He unloosened this, and had scarcely done so when a limb of a tree swung around and pulled the whole piece of painted canvas away from the spot and across the gulch.

Our hero rubbed his eyes, for he had never seen anything like it before.

To all appearances, there was the identical trail he had stopped upon a moment or so before.

But he knew different, however.

It was simply a branch of the trail that ran for some distance and then came out on the main one again.



"I'll go this way, anyhow," he thought, and mounting his horse, he started the animal on a walk through the place.

When he had covered perhaps a hundred yards he suddenly heard angry voices close at hand.

Instantly he came to a stop.

Then he cautiously dismounted and tied his steed to a jagged point of rock.

Right near him was a cave-like opening, and without the least hesitation he crept in.

The voices came from the opening, and already he recognized one of them as belonging to Tom Turpin.

He made his way softly into the cave until he came to an angle of rock that he could peer from into the big natural apartment.

And when he did look he was astonished at what was before him.

The cave was lighted from a rift in the rocks, and the light shone on three people in the cave.

One was a young and comely looking woman of perhaps thirty, and one was an old man of seventy or more.

The other was Tom Turpin, the broncho buster.

All three were standing in the center of the natural apartment, and the old man seemed to be boiling over with rage.

"She shall not go with you to civilization!" the old man cried in a quivering voice, as our hero peered around and took in the scene. "Never while I live shall she leave me. If she has promised to be your bride the promise shall never be fulfilled. I—I will kill her first!"

He made a feeble attempt as though to clutch the young woman by the throat, and even as he did so a gasp came from his lips and he clutched his hand to his heart.

Then with a groan he sank to the skin-covered floor—dead! Both Turpin and the woman rushed to assist him, but they saw it was too late.

"Eva, it is all over with him," said Turpin, in a husky voice.

"Yes," was the sobbing reply.

"It is better so, ain't it, dear?"

"Yes; for he knew not what he was doing, and the life I have been leading for the last two months has been killing me by inches."

At this juncture Young Wild West made a noise by clearing his throat.

The couple looked around with a start.

"Do not be alarmed," said the boy.

The woman uttered a scream, but Turpin quickly reassured her.

"This is Young Wild West, the best friend I have got, outside of you, Eva," he remarked.

Wild walked outside, and stood there a few moments.

He wanted to give them a chance to recover themselves.

Pretty soon the voice of Turpin called him.

He went in and heard a rather remarkable story.

The old gentleman who had just died had become crazed over the death of his wife a little over two months before.

He had been traveling through the country giving lectures with the aid of a stereopticon, and his wife and daughter had helped him.

It so happened that they had been in Spondulicks when the wife and mother died, and as soon as she was buried the old man had purchased a horse and covered wagon and started off to live in the mountains, forcing his daughter to go with him.

He was crazed over the death of his wife and got it in his head that she had been murdered.

Every night it was his ambition to reproduce her picture as he had painted it by the aid of the stereopticon.

Chance led the crazed man to Gauntlet Gulch and there he found quarters that just suited his crazy purposes.

He forced his daughter to help him fit up a place to live in, and then assist him in deceiving and scaring passing travelers.

Whenever he flashed the horrible-looking picture on the gray wall of rock, he invariably uttered a maniacal shriek.

Sometimes he would do this before he turned on the picture, and then he would wait until after it was shown.

The ghost of Gauntlet Gulch was thus explained to the full satisfaction of Young Wild West.

"I can see how the ghost appeared," he said to the young woman, who had told the story in detail. "But there is one question I would like to ask. How was it that the ghostly figure appeared in the cave where the masked men had us bound last night?"

"I did that without the aid of my father. I was close by when you were captured. I ran back to our cave here, bent on saving you. I found my poor father asleep, so I took the machine and hastened to where you were. I got there just as they fell upon more of your friends, and then I imitated my father's scream the best I could and flashed the picture in the cave.

"And it was you who severed our bonds in the darkness?"

"Yes; I lighted a pack of common fire-crackers and threw them about the head of the ghost, and when they fled I very easily set you free."

"It is a wonderful story," said Wild. "It is wonderful because I know every word of it is true. Now, then, the best thing to be done is to bury the old gentleman and go to Weston with us."

"I would like to take the body with us, and have a regular funeral service."

"Very well, then. It shall be as you say."

Half an hour later the horse and wagon of the late ghost manufacturer, as he might have been properly called, was moving slowly up the gulch with Wild and Tom Turpin riding at its side.

It contained, beside the dead body, all the trappings that had belonged to him, even to the pieces of painted canvas he had so neatly placed to cover the passage, so he could change the way through that portion of the gulch at his will, to keep people away from his cave.

The rather queer-looking outfit was nearing the mouth of the gulch when half a dozen masked men suddenly appeared.

Young Wild West saw that two of them were the Bad Brothers, and before they could fire a shot he laid both of them low by his unerring shooting.

Tom Turpin was no mean hand with a rifle, either, and the result was that he dropped one, and the others were put to flight.

That was the last of that particular gang around Gauntlet Gulch.

Young Wild West led the way into Weston that night pretty late.

The next day the minister of the town performed a double duty.

The first was to bury the body of the crazed old man, and the second was to join Eva, the daughter, and Tom Turpin into the holy bonds of matrimony.

"This is what I meant when I spoke to you of ther million dollars, Young Wild West," said the broncho buster, as he kissed his blushing bride.

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG WILD WEST'S BIG DAY; OR, THE DOUBLE WEDDING AT WESTON."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.



## CURRENT NEWS

In Siberia is comprised one-tenth of all the land surface of the globe. The United States, Great Britain, and all Europe, except Russia, could be put into Siberia, with a big corner to spare.

Andrew Osborne, 64, of Congers, N. Y., was crushed to death at Rockland Lake when a big boulder, loosened by a dynamite blast, rolled down Hook Mountain and struck him. After being set free it dropped 600 feet and then rolled till it hit Osborne.

Mrs. C. M. Johnson, eighty years old, accompanied her son, Floyd M. Young, to "Young's Retreat," Atlanta, Ga., recently and beat him at pistol target practice. Mrs. Johnson has been known for years as a crack shot. Her son has offered a ticket to the Panama Exposition to any woman of her age who can beat her.

The little fish called the anchovy is found in large quantities in the Mediterranean Sea and on the coasts of Spain, Portugal and France, where extensive fisheries are carried on during the months of May, June and July. Sardines are also abundant in the Mediterranean, and are also found in the Atlantic.

Five hundred persons are searching the mountains in the vicinity of Elkins, W. Va., for trace of Mrs. Elizabeth Riffe, seventy, who disappeared from her home recently. Thirty years ago the woman's son, four years old, wandered into the mountains and never returned. Since then she has often gone on excursions into the hills in the belief that she would find him.

Mrs. Annie Olson is believed to be the first housewife in the United States to "move" by parcel post. Postoffice clerks were astounded recently when she demanded stamps for conveyance of her household goods from Seattle to Quinault, Wash. "I figured it would be cheaper this way," said Mrs. Olson, handing in a barrel containing her kitchen stove. Other articles of furniture followed, weighing in all 337 pounds and including kitchen utensils, a rocking-chair and a dining-room table, among other things. The moving cost her \$4.62 in stamps. It cost her \$20 the old way, she said.

When Arthur Cunningham, a druggist, became intoxicated he desired to take a nap. He wandered about the streets, then climbed a stairway to the home of Miss Sadie Thompson, Columbus, Ind. He opened a door without knocking and found he was in the bathroom. The tub looked inviting, so he crawled in and went to sleep. Later when Miss Thompson went to the bathroom and opened the door she screamed louder than a woman is supposed to scream when she finds a man under the bed. She telephoned the police that there was a man in her bathtub. Two officers removed him.

Socialism appears to be making active progress in Europe through force of circumstances resulting from the war. In Germany all the industries appear to be under the control of the government, and Great Britain is taking in hand the organization of war industries in a big and thorough way. A committee has been provided with absolutely full and complete powers, presided over by the chancellor of the exchequer himself, and including representatives of the admiralty, the war office, the treasury, the Board of Trade and others. The whole country is to be mapped out, and every available factory and workshop is to be drawn into the scheme.

Electric-pneumatic brakes are soon to displace the air-brakes used on the passenger trains of the Pennsylvania railroad. This form of brake has been found necessary because of the weight of trains made up of all-steel cars. In long trains the shock and surging accompanying the application of the brakes has proved very objectionable indeed. In a twelve-car train it takes eight seconds for the full braking force to be felt at the last car. With the electro-pneumatic brake, the braking power will be exerted at the same instant on all the cars, and within two seconds after the application of the brakes, the whole braking force will be exerted throughout the train.

The last number of L'Astronomie is chiefly devoted to the subject of "the giant sun Canopus." Though somewhat less bright than Sirius, on account of its vastly greater distance from us, Canopus is much the larger star. Its volume is supposed to be 2,420,000 times that of the sun, and its brilliancy 49,700 times. Walkey's computations seem to show that Canopus actually occupies a central position in the stellar universe, as we know it. The sun is credited with a distance of 489 light-years from this central luminary, around which it is said to describe an orbit the plane of which is inclined at an angle of 20 degrees to the plane of the galaxy. The sun's last periastron passage is stated to have occurred 6,950,000 years ago. The whole subject is, of course, highly speculative.

We are told in the current newspapers that Alexander Foster Humphrey, of Pittsburgh, has invented a bullet supplied with narcotics and antiseptics, the former to relieve the pain of a wound and the latter to aid the healing operations. At least two patents have been issued for narcotizing bullets, both especially designed for use in capturing the lower animals. One patent issued in 1910 to James Francis O'Byrne and Thomas A. Flood, of Salt Lake City, for a bullet carrying a narcotic whose anaesthetic effect when shot into a fleshy portion of an animal would so affect it as to render its capture and control comparatively easy. The other patent was issued in 1911 to K. Burgsmuller, of Kreiensen, Germany, for a cartridge filled with a mixture of capsicine in an immediately gasifiable form for narcotizing animals.



# The Fate of Philip Funk

—OR—

## LEFT IN THE LAND OF FIRE

By "PAWNEE JACK"

(A SERIAL STORY)

### CHAPTER XVII.

#### PHILIP FUNK GROWS FRIENDLY.

"George!" cried Tom, "do you know you make me tired? Talk about sailors' superstitions! Why, you are the worst I ever saw!"

"It's no dog!" persisted George. "It's a demon, that's what it is!"

"What rubbish! Why, it might be a dog belonging to the Fuegians, or a wild dog for that matter."

"None on the island. The Fuegians have no dogs. That's a well-known fact."

"Then it's Susie's dog. Do away with all that nonsense. There he goes again. Here, boy! Here, boy! Here, Ned! Here!"

Tom shouted as loud as he could, and was rewarded within two minutes by catching sight of Susie's big Newfoundland which came bounding toward them along the bluff.

George, unable to divest his mind of its superstition, pulled away in terror, while the dog leaped about Tom, barking joyfully, springing up, putting his paws on his shoulders, and licking his face.

"Ned! Good Ned! Down, sir!" cried Tom. "Where are they, Ned? Where are they, boy? Show us the way!"

"For heaven's sake don't, Tom! It makes my blood run cold," said George. "Don't let him come near me or I shall be tempted to shoot him."

"And when he fell dead at your feet then you would begin to believe he is actually a real dog, I suppose. I never heard such nonsense. There he goes! He'll take us right to where Susie and Jeff are if they still live."

George raised no further objection, and they followed on after the dog.

Ned went trotting on ahead, waiting for them to come up from time to time, until he led them back to the promontory, stopping at the stone heap where Susie sat down to wait while George and Tom went out to look at the ship.

Here he began to scratch around a certain flat stone, barking all the while.

"That's it," said Tom. "That stone comes up. Of course, it is nothing but a way down into the cave."

"It is certainly loose," replied George, stooping down to examine it. "I don't know about pulling it up, though.

We don't want to wake up a swarm of dwarfs, not by a good deal."

"Hello! You begin to believe!" said Tom. "The stone comes up, though, all the same."

"Hark!" said George. "I thought I heard some one behind that big rock. By thunder, the dog heard it, too!"

Tom had just time to clutch Ned by the neck and hold him back, for the great shaggy head of the man they had seen the night before was now thrust out from behind the rock.

"Boo—woo! Boo—woo!" he exclaimed, imitating Ned's bark.

Then a singular thing happened.

Dogs, as is well known, often show the greatest fear in the presence of insane people.

Ned did now.

He crouched whining at Tom's feet, while the man behind the rock kept mimicking him.

Suddenly the strange figure sprang up, and, stepping out into full view, shouted:

"Don't go there! Don't go there! Unless you want to become what I am don't you raise that stone."

"It's Philip Funk!" cried George. "Mad or sane, there's no doubt about it! Yes, it's Phil!"

"Of course, of course!" shouted the stranger. "That was my name once. Funk! Funk! Funk! Philip Funk! But I'm not that person now! Oh, no! I'm a king! I'm king of the land of fire! I'm worth millions! Millions of dollars in gold! I've got it all hidden away here! I'm the richest man in the world, and yet just now I'm starving. Will you give me something to eat?"

"Sure we will," said George quietly—his ridiculous fears seemed to be forgotten now.

"Come over here, Phil. We'll fix you up. All you want to eat. Don't you know me?"

"Know you? No! I don't want to know you. I want something to eat, though, so I'm going to trust you, if you will agree to keep that dog from eating me."

"I'll take care of the dog," said Tom. "Come over here and put your hand on my shoulder. When he sees that you are my friend he won't touch you."

"I'll do it," said Philip Funk, and with an air of solemn dignity he walked over to where Tom stood, and laid his hand upon the boy's shoulder.

"The king has touched you!" he said. "Well, you ought to be proud!"



George then produced some cold fried ham, crackers and cheese.

Philip Funk sat down upon the rocks and eagerly devoured them.

He did not talk while eating, nor even look at the boys.

George drew Tom aside, Ned following them, keeping close to Tom's heels—growling occasionally as he looked back at Philip Funk.

"It's Phil, all right, but he is greatly changed," said George. "In some way he has escaped death. What a horrible thing to have lived with these dwarfs all these years! No wonder he has lost his head. Did you mark what he said about the treasure, Tom?"

"Of course I did," replied Tom. "He knows where it is, all right."

"Sure! Let's work him easy. He'll tell us later on."

"I'm going to raise that stone, George. You don't have any doubts about the dog being a real genuine dog now?"

"I guess I shall have to admit that," said George. "But of course the girl must be dead."

"There's Philip Funk! Three years among the dwarfs and not dead yet."

"That's so. I—— Heavens! Look there! Won't have to raise the stone now!"

The stone had been raised from below, and the ugly head of one of the Fuegian dwarfs appeared from beneath.

He gave a peculiar cry, which Philip Funk instantly answered.

Then the stone was dropped, and the head disappeared.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### NED GIVES TOM HIS LAST STEER.

As the stone dropped Philip Funk gave another yell, then another and another, which started Ned to barking again; it was all Tom could do to hold him.

Still yelling like a demon, the mad sailor made a rush for the stone, pulled it up, balanced it on one end, and, slipping into the hole beneath it, also disappeared, the stone dropping down behind him with a thud.

Ned pulled himself free then, and jumped about the stone, barking more furiously than ever.

Tom could restrain his curiosity no longer.

Running to the stone, he had raised it up before George could get there to help him.

It was just as he supposed. They could now look down into a large cave opening out upon the beach.

The opening was at the extreme end of the cave, and there was a path leading down among the rocks, along which Philip Funk was bounding after the dwarf.

Ned sprang through the opening, and dashed down over the rocks, barking all the while.

This caused the greatest excitement among the dwarfs, who seemed to spring out from every hole and corner.

Philip Funk stopped, and threw stones at the dog, whereupon Ned wriggled himself in between two big rocks and disappeared.

"That's where they have hidden Susie," declared Tom. "They seem afraid of the dog, too, and yet don't try to kill it. They must have some of your notions, George."

"Never mind about my notions," said George, "nor the dog, either. They are getting ready to go out in their canoes. Let's watch them for a moment, boy, before we make a move."

"I'm going down there, George, if it costs me my life."

"I know! I know just what sort of a hustler you are, but won't it be better to go after most of the dwarfs have skipped out?"

It was plain to be seen that the dwarfs were on the move.

They were launching their canoes by the dozens.

Although several looked up and saw the boys peering down through the hole, no particular attention was paid to them.

A huge fire burned at the entrance to the cave, around which the women, children, and a few old men were hovering.

Everything ready, a general shout went up, and the ugly little fellows swarmed into the canoes and began paddling away.

Philip Funk seemed to be perfectly at home with them. He also got into one of the canoes and went off with the rest, his mad yells rising shrilly above the cries of the dwarfs.

The boy hurried to the end of the promontory to see what direction they were taking, expecting, of course, to see them making along the shore to the wreck, but instead of that the canoes were headed directly across the straits.

"Hello! That's a new tack!" exclaimed George. "What can it mean?"

"Look over there! That tells the story!" cried Tom. "Don't you see?"

Tom was pointing across the straits.

The atmosphere was far clearer than they had yet seen it, and there was no difficulty in seeing the opposite shore.

Above a great pile of rocks which projected out into the water, and seemed to be an island, the masts of a ship were seen.

"That's the Sutton, and that's where they are making for!" said Tom.

They watched the course of the canoes until it became certain that they were making straight for the island on the other side of the straits, and then returned to the hole.

"Well," said George, "I suppose you are bound to go down anyhow. I'm with you, of course, so here's a go."

He slipped through the hole, and Tom was just about to follow him when suddenly George gave a yell and started back.

The cause was evident.

Dwarfs suddenly began springing up from the rocks all around him.

Ugly little women and uglier old men they were for the most part, but they were just as fierce.

Before George could retreat they had him captive.

A dozen or more came crowding about him.

(To be continued)



# ITEMS OF INTEREST

## A WOMAN STRIVES TO BECOME A LAWYER.

Fired with the ambition to become a lawyer that she may obtain the freedom of her husband, who is serving a life sentence for murder in Oklahoma. Mrs. Mamie Baker, dividing her time between her duties as a household servant and attending public school, has advanced from the bottom of the grammar grades to the high school in less than two years. Mrs. Baker is a Bohemian and unfamiliarity with the American language has been an additional drawback in her way, but she is rapidly overcoming all obstacles.

## A LOST POCKETBOOK FOUND.

In 1888 a man now living in the West attended the Perry County Fair Grounds at Newport, Pa., and on the fair grounds found a pocketbook containing \$5 and a small trinket. A Newport paper carried under "lost and found" an advertisement, inserted by W. D. Ballinger, of Millerstown, which stated that the owner would receive his property by identifying the trinket. Mr. Ballinger stated that a friend recently sent him the pocketbook, the trinket and a \$5 bill, with interest and money to defray the cost of advertising.

## SNAKES CAUSES AUTO WRECK.

James Morrison, of Orange, N. J., went automobiling with his family the other afternoon, and when over the Second Mountain drove into a dirt road so that his wife and two children could pick wild flowers. They left the car under a large oak tree and sauntered off.

Half an hour later Mrs. Morrison and her two children returned to the car for the return trip. Coiled up on the front seat was a large copperhead snake. The mother and children, dropping the flowers, ran away screaming.

Mr. Morrison returned to the car, and as the branches hung low over it, pushed it back to the macadam road of Eagle Rock avenue. Getting a stout club from the woods, he swung at the snake, missed it, and accidentally gave the car a push, and down the hill it went.

The grade was very steep and the automobile ran through a wooden fence into the farm of Jacob Miller, striking a calf, killing a couple of chickens and finally halting after it had torn away part of Miller's back porch. By this time there was not much left of the car, and Mr. Morrison with his wife and two children walked four miles home. The snake escaped.

## THE KAISER'S TRAIN.

The most luxurious train in Europe, a veritable palace on wheels, says a contributor to Tit-Bits, is that which the Kaiser uses when he travels between Berlin and the fighting line.

Six coaches, each weighing over 60 tons, compose the special train, and of these four are reserved for the Emperor and his suite, and the other two are used for kitchen. The second coach in the train is the one re-

served by the Kaiser for his personal quarters, and it contains a salon, bedrooms, dressing-room, bathroom and sleeping apartments for his bodyguard. The salon is paneled in the wood of an ancient cedar tree taken from Mount Lebanon, the gift of ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid of Turkey. The door is of black wood taken from the piles of a wooden bridge built across the Rhine by Julius Caesar in the year 55 B. C., and the ceiling is decorated with a design representing the six great rivers of Germany.

The windows of the salon are protected by thick steel bars, and armed sentries stand at the doors of the apartment night and day. The last coach in the train is used by an engineer, who has charge of the machinery that operates a complicated system of emergency brakes. The Kaiser's two dachshunds, Wardl and Hexl, have their kennels on the train, and they generally accompany their master on his travels.

## THE GREATEST SEAPORT.

New York is the greatest of the world's ports, and the Industrial Bureau of the Merchants' Association has vouched for the fact.

Of the ten largest ports listed in the returns for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1913, New York comes first, her imports and exports reaching the enormous figure of \$1,973,981.693. London comes second with \$1,791,857,641, while Hamburg and Liverpool run one another close for third place, with \$1,674,187,176 and \$1,637,280,176, respectively.

The commercial growth of New York, naturally, depends on that of the American nation, and its prosperity has been steadily increasing year by year. Statistics for 1862 show the imports of the United States to be \$189,356,677 and its exports to be \$190,670,501. New York alone, therefore, has to-day over five times the amount of commerce which was carried on by the whole United States half a century ago.

But how comes it that New York should stand so high in the list of the world's great ports, while the rest of America's cities are not even mentioned?

Well, the value of a city to a nation depends greatly on its position on the map. Take that of New York. It has 748 miles of direct waterfront.

Baltimore, Philadelphia, New Orleans and Boston together have less than 100 miles.

But New York's prosperity is likely to increase even more rapidly in years to come. The Panama Canal, open to commerce, means that Yokohama is nearer by 1,600 miles to Manhattan Harbor than it is to Liverpool. The distance to Sidney is lessened by 2,500 miles. Wellington is 4,000 and Valparaiso 2,574 miles nearer.

Moreover, the opening of the two other artificial waterways, the Erie and Lake Champlain canals, will help to bring about this desired consummation. Not only will large markets be thus opened to the New York manufacturer, but large sources of raw materials will also be placed at his disposal.



# THE ROB ROYS

—OR—

## BOLD BOB, THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM

By DICK ELLISON

(A SERIAL STORY)

### CHAPTER VII (continued)

But it was no dream, and he realized it more than any one else. He knew it was true, real, and that there was no other way out. His favorite pupil had been found in this disreputable resort, so much under the influence of liquor that he was unable to lift even one finger.

He shook the young man roughly by the shoulder, but he could not arouse him. He was so stupid that hours must elapse ere he would awaken.

In despair Professor Romaine sought Madam Clements.

"Has this young man been in the habit of visiting this—this place very often?" he asked huskily. "I never knew he came here at all."

Madam Clements dropped her bleached head, and tried very hard to blush (an almost impossible task beneath her thick coating of paint and powder) and then she answered slowly:

"He has been a frequent visitor here of late, Professor Romaine. I like the boy, but as I keep a public place I cannot say who shall come here or who shall not. I am very fond of the boy, but what can I do? I cannot very well tell him to go away, and I have to be civil to all of my guests."

"Then he has been in the habit of frequenting this place night after night?" Professor Romaine asked, while his handsome, grave face grew still paler. "I am more than surprised to learn it, for I never believed that Robert MacGregor would ever stoop to be deceitful. He is the last young man in the world whom I would distrust."

"Ah, but appearances are often very deceitful, Professor Romaine," and Madam Clements shrugged her plump shoulders while a mock serious expression settled over her painted face. "You cannot always judge by the faces. Even the wisest and shrewdest of us are apt to be fooled by a sweet tongue. I regret to say that your pupil, Mr. Robert MacGregor, has been a frequent visitor at my place for many months. While I say I regret it in one sense, in another I do not, for, of course, as you must know, I depend solely upon this place to make me a living, and every one who comes here means so many more dollars in my pocket. You cannot, therefore, blame me for giving them a welcome. I am a woman alone in the world, and I have no one to depend upon save myself."

"Of course I understand that you are in this business for money, madam," and a half-mocking smile curled Prof. Romaine's lips as he spoke. "But it seems to me that you might find a much more honorable and profitable

one. It is like the spider's web holding out an inducement to the hapless fly. So long as you are in this infamous business young men will flock here, corrupting their morals, ruining their lives, and you, Madam Clements, are responsible for all that, for if this place were not in existence you would not be the means of ruining the lives of so many young men."

Madam Clements flushed hotly beneath her mask of paint and powder.

"Do you mean to insult me, Prof. Romaine?" she asked, trying hard to appear indignant. "Is it a very gentlemanly act for you to thus insult me when you know I am alone in the world and trying hard to make an honest living. It is not just, it is not even generous. I would never have believed that you, a gentleman, could thus insult a helpless, unprotected woman!"

"Pray, forgive me, Madam Clements, for I meant no insult," the hapless professor stammered, his face growing redder and redder. "I did not mean to insult you; in fact, that was the very last of my intentions, but you know this place has a very bad name, and at the same time it has a sort of fascination for all the youths in the neighborhood. They will come here, even though they knew it meant ruin, for all boys are alike. The more danger, the better they like it. If this place were not in existence then there would be no trouble."

Madam Clements once more dropped her eyes, saying with a sigh:

"But, my dear Professor Romaine, what can I do to earn an honest living? You forget that I have no trade, no business whatever, and should I give up this place starvation stares me in the face. When a woman is all alone in the big, cold world, with no one to lift a hand to help her, what can she do?" pressing a bit of lace-bordered cambric to her eyes, while her voice faltered, then broke. "You men are so cruel to women. You think we are able to fight life's battle as well as you are."

"There, there, my dear lady, say no more," the good-natured professor hastened to say. "I am sorry if I have said anything to offend you, for I would not be so rude for all the money in the wide world. Of course it is not your fault, as you say, if these foolish youths will come here and drink and gamble. But I am sorry that my favorite pupil is in the habit of visiting here."

"I am sorry in one way, and in another I am not," Madam Clements answered. "I do not like to see clever young men going astray, and yet, when they drop in here,



it means money in my pocket. I like your young friend, Prof. Romaine, but he is a wild, reckless boy, and there is no use in trying to reform him. I say this because I know what I am talking about. While he is all that is bright and clever, there is no doubt but what he is the wildest of the wild. I like him very much indeed, but what can I do? It is in reality nothing to me which road he takes, therefore, why should I trouble myself when I have troubles enough of my own?"

Madam Clements was a very good actress indeed. Many and many a time had she played her part when there was a lurking demon in her heart. She could smile upon an enemy, while all the time her lips would far rather have abused them—and Prof. Romaine, keen and shrewd as he was in everything else, was just the kind of a man to be fooled by a woman of her stamp.

"Of course I understand the entire circumstance, Madam Clements," he stammered, feeling as if he had in some way insulted this (to him) meek, saintly creature, "and, mind, I do not blame you. It is not your fault, but that of that wayward, headstrong boy in yonder. He is the one to blame, not you. I am more than sorry if I have caused you any annoyance."

"Do not speak of it, Professor Romaine," the adventuress said in a low, husky voice. "It is all right. We lone women have more to put up with than any one ever dreams of. We are blamed for hundreds of things that we never do. We are called bold and forward because we earn our own living, and it is so hard."

Again that dainty lace-bordered handkerchief was pressed to her eyes, and the sob that heaved the fair madam's bosom touched the professor's great, big heart.

"I will bid you good night, madam," he remarked presently, "and see if I cannot put a little bit of sense in that boy's silly head. I am ashamed of him, but I shall try and see if I can save him."

"A very difficult task, I fear, Prof. Romaine," Madam Clements sighed, remembering her part. "He is very nice, indeed, but he is so wild and reckless. I would like to see him saved fully as much as you would, but what can I do? Use your influence with him, and that may be of some avail."

Once more Prof. Romaine went back to the chamber where Bold Bob lay sleeping heavily, and he endeavored to awaken him. At last he succeeded, but when his heavy bloodshot eyes were unclosed, Prof. Romaine turned away in dismay, for if ever there was recklessness and dissipation inured in any one's eyes, it was in those of the gallant captain of the Rob Roys. No wonder that Prof. Romaine felt as if he could cry aloud, for it was, indeed, a pitiful sight, and while Robert MacGregor was in reality innocent, in the eyes of his teacher he was guilty and disgraced.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE TRIAL.

The day set for Robert's trial arrived, and in Prof. Romaine's study a strangely-assorted crowd was gathered. The football team of San Remo College was present and of course the Rob Roys. Prof. Romaine, grave, sad-faced,

yet stern, sat behind his desk, and away over in one corner of the room was big, bluff, good-hearted Mike McCarthy, the porter at Fairview, and close beside him his especial chum, Sandy MacSherry, a shrewd, keen-eyed Scotchman, who was a sort of helper about the grounds and garden, and last of all came Tip and Topsey with their dusky parents, each one guarding their favorite. Rosie, a fat negress, whose weight could not have been far from three hundred pounds, jealously watched Topsey, while Jerry, a small, meek-looking colored gentleman, who had surrendered his will years before to that of his better half, lingered close to Tip, the apple of his eye as it were.

"No, sah, I hain't gwine ter let dem chilluns go in dat room wifout deir mammy," Rosie had said when she was informed that the twins' evidence was very important. "If dey got ter go, den de ole lady goes 'long wif dem. An' when I sets down my foot, yo' can't raise hit nohow, honey."

"What dey gwine ter do wif us, mammy?" Topsey asked with a wail of terror. "I 'clar ter goodness I hain't done nuffin' fo' ter git licked. I done gwine ter run away. I nebber stole dem chickens nohow."

"Look ahead, chile, do yo' mean ter stan' dar an' look yo' mammy in de face an' talk 'bout stealin' chickens?" Rosie asked, taking her offspring by the ear and pinching it until she howled. "Yo' wanter disgrace yo' ole mammy in dat way? Yo' wait till dis trial am ober, an' den I has a reckonin' wif yo', niggah, an' doan yo' fo'git hit. Why," with a look of supreme scorn at the meek and humble Jerry, "you am as big a fool as yo' daddy, an' he doan know a hen from a rooster. Shut up now, or I crack dat thick head fo' yo'."

No wonder the twins were terrified beyond all measure when they heard those threats, for Rosie always kept her word, and the recollection of a certain long, thick strap that hung behind the kitchen door suddenly arose before their eyes.

Henry Selden and Rinold Wamba were present, and while they were both grave, apparently very sad, there was a wicked glitter in the eyes of the former that one could not fail to see.

Tip and Topsey were the first witnesses to be examined, for they were the first ones who had overheard the plot to shoot the captain of the Rob Roys, and Prof. Romaine thought it might be a plot to get him to the notorious roadhouse.

"I done 'clar ter goodness dat de gentleman I heerd talkin' 'bout shootin' Marse Bob had long whiskers, an' I know hit was de debbil hisself," Tip declared, and Topsey swore to his statement; so it was of no use to question them further.

Then Henry Selden took the stand. He was shrewd enough to know that it would never do for him to say too much against his rival, but he could manage to cast suspicion upon him, and that would be sufficient.

"Do you know of the accused ever visiting that notorious place, and while there drinking intoxicating liquors?" Professor Romaine asked him, watching him keenly.

(To be continued)



## TIMELY TOPICS

The Navy Department was notified the other afternoon that Gov. Hunt of Arizona has decided that the super-dreadnought Arizona, which will be launched at the New York Navy Yard on June 19, shall be christened with water instead of wine. Arizona is in the Prohibition column. The dreadnought Kansas, named for another Prohibition State, was the last fighting ship to be christened with water.

J. B. Boggs, a farmer of Talbotton, Ga., reports a remarkable hen egg. He found one just a little larger than the ordinary egg, and when he broke it the usual yolk and white were found, but inside was another well-formed egg, just a little larger than a partridge egg. It had a shell and was shaped just like the other egg. The egg-shell with the little egg inside is on exhibition at Talbotton, Ga., at a hardware store.

Owen Kelley's cork leg instead of acting as a life preserver recently when he fell into the lake from the pier at the foot of East Ninth street, Cleveland, came very near being a life destroyer. Struggle as he would he could not raise his head to a level with his leg, which floated buoyantly. Commander Kelly, of the Ohio Naval Militia steamer the Dorothea, was coming ashore and dragged the drowning man out.

Natives hunting seals last winter are reported in mail advices received from Icy Cape, on the Arctic coast, near latitude 70, to have seen a white man marooned on an ice floe, which was drifting in a southwesterly direction toward Wrangell Island, Alaska. Whether the man was a member of Vilhjalmur Stefansson's Canadian Arctic expedition, or was a survivor of the wrecked whaling schooner New Jersey, the natives were unable to determine, but the general belief here and among the natives at Icy Cape is that the man was a member of the Stefansson party of three who started north over the ice from Martin Point, west of the Mackenzie River, April 7, 1914. With Stefansson at that time was Ole Anderson and Storker Storkerson.

George W. Childs Drexel, the Philadelphia sportsman and commodore of the Corinthian Yacht Club, is having built for himself the speed wonder of the 1915 crop of motor boats, a runabout which will be guaranteed to average thirty-two miles an hour. The boat will be called the Ace, and will be about 50 feet in length and will have a beam of about 7 feet 8½ inches. Her lines and general appearance as to construction of the hull, coupled with the immense power to be installed, give every indication that the new craft will be able to attain a speed of about thirty-five miles per hour. Two Loew Victor eight-cylinder high speed motors will be installed in the boat, each of which is rated at about 200 horse-power. The boat is about one-third completed, and will be ready for launching early in June.

It is safe to say that pure water may be drunk at any time and with hardly any limitations save such as might appeal to any one. Water is universally man's greatest and safest drink, and, rightly used, would in itself largely help to extend his life well toward the century mark. Food tastes better and is more agreeably relished by the water drinker than by those who drink wine at table. Strong liquors taken at all times confer no useful assistance in passing the dangers of life, and in self-interest it would be nearer to safety to let nature's provision for drink have full credit, as being the best, and accept no substitute. A good drink for man is pure water, and the ordinary drinking water of a country is, or should be, always appreciated by the dweller in that country.

Asphyxiating gas, which has been used with considerable success along the battle line, failed to assist the authorities materially in their efforts to capture Jean Boutet, an insane workman who tried to kill his wife, then barricaded himself in the cellar of his home at St. Ouen, on the outskirts of Paris. A lasso and "Wild West" methods proved more effective. Efforts of the police to drive Boutet out of the cellar were futile and an appeal was made to Paris. Firemen were sent from that city with the director of the city laboratory and gas was pumped into the cellar. One fireman equipped with a smoke helmet entered and tried to seize the madman, but soon crawled out half suffocated and without his helmet, which Boutet had pulled off. After a somewhat prolonged siege the workman was lassoed and carried off to an asylum.

In most countries it is easy for a man to enlist. There is, indeed, but one army in the world which is hard to enter, and that is the army of the United States. There is no great rush to enter the service, but there are always many more men offering than are needed. The physical test for applicants is extremely severe, while the applicant must have a fair education and proper certificates of character from at least two reputable persons. Less than a majority of those seeking to enter the service are native Americans, but it is required that every man enlisting shall at least have declared his intention of becoming a citizen of the United States, and the effort is, if possible, to obtain natives. The stripe of men applying is remarkably good. Re-enlistments are frequent, and as about half a score of non-commissioned officers receive commissions every year, the man that holds by the service has a chance to do well. Favoritism, it is said, is unknown in the matter of promotions from the ranks in the United States army. Of course, education, good manners and all other gifts naturally help a man forward in the army as elsewhere. Recruiting officers find that the chief thing that brings to them the kind of men they want is temporary embarrassment. The man who is a chronic ne'er-do-well has no chance whatever at a recruiting office, and the man of vicious habits is equally hopeless.



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## GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

A fish pond probably will soon be built on the State penal farm, Indiana, according to the trustees. Deer Creek passes through the farm and the trustees say they will stock the stream with game fish. The trustees say they want the prisoners on the farm to have some recreation. They are of the opinion that fishing will be about as good as any.

The shortage of doctors and surgeons in Austria is so alarming that the newspapers are urging medical men from nearby neutral countries to enter the Austrian service. At present, it is stated, there are only two doctors available for each thousand wounded men. Any neutral physician, the newspapers add, can get \$6 to \$7 a day, besides his food and lodging.

York Castle, which is being used as a place of detention for prisoners of war in England, is one of the finest of the nation's old buildings. It is well situated for its present purpose, being between the rivers Foss and Ouse. Its walls inclose no fewer than four acres, with space to contain 40,000 persons. The castle dates back certainly from Roman times, possibly from the days of the ancient Britons.

The United States has another new flag to be added to the only list of squared bunting that must be officially recognized. It is the flag of the Panama Canal, and consists of a blue square bearing the letter "P. C." in white, and will be used by all vessels in the marine equipment division of the canal. It will fly at the bows of launches when on official duty and on dress occasions and at the foremast head of tugs on duty.

Students paying all or part of their expenses through the University of Alabama earn something over \$5,000 a year for manual labor alone, according to W. M. Brunson, of Elba, Ala., chairman of the University Self-Help Bureau. The average for each of the forty students engaged in the work this year has been \$3 a week for work out of school hours or about \$110 for the year. During the summer school students usually earn about \$1,000.

The discovery has just been made at Colombo that cocoanut water, which has always been considered a useless waste product, is an excellent rubber coagulant. Millions of gallons of cocoanut water allowed to run to waste on estates can now be made use of at a good profit. The cocoanut water is allowed to ferment for four or five days, after which it can be used without further delay as coagulating latex. One to two ounces of the fermented cocoanut water is allowed to coagulate one pint of the pure latex. This is said to produce a fine rubber, superior to that procured with the use of crude acetic acid. The color of the rubber with acetic acid fermentation is decidedly inferior to the cocoanut water fermentation. Cocoanut water is now made up in bulk and shipped in large quantities from cocoanut plantations to the various rubber estates.

## GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Teacher—Which is grammatically correct: "The wages of sin are death," or "The wages of sin is death?" Miss Prim—Don't you think, teacher, that "salary" is a more elegant term?

"Whar yo' boy now?" some one asked the old Georgia ducky. "De gover'mint's takin' care of him." "Dat so?" "Yes, suh! He's in the new Fed'ral prison, wid a nice gray suit on him."

"Are you at all familiar with Shelley?" he asked. "I should say not!" she indignantly replied. "I never have been familiar with any young man in my life, and I don't even know this person you speak of."

"Strange," said the first tramp meditatively, "how few of our youthful dreams ever come true!" "Oh, I dunno," said his companion: "I remember I used to dream about wearin' long pants, and now I guess I wear 'em longer than any one else in the country."

"What time will this train reach Perkins Junction?" asked a traveler on a short-line railroad in Missouri. "There ain't no telling," said the conductor affably. "Me and the engineer are going to get off down the road a piece and hunt rabbits for a spell."

Mr. Hunter (reading)—Hub! this advertisement says "Roomy flat to let." Talk about your "condensed lye!" Mrs. Hunter—How do you mean? Mr. Hunter—Well, if it's roomy it surely can't be a flat; if it's really a flat it can't be roomy; and if by some miracle it should be a roomy flat it wouldn't be "to let."

In crossing the ocean a father and son both became very seasick. The father recovered quickly, but the son was so exhausted with the attack that he sank into a state of apathy, from which it seemed impossible to arouse him. The steamer physician, thinking he would try a sudden shock, said: "I have bad news for you; your father is dead!" The son, raising his expressionless eyes to the doctor, replied: "Lucky man!"



## THE OLD MILL.

By John Sherman

The old mill at Stonyhurst, on the coast of Maine, where the shore was particularly rocky and precipitous, had long been regarded as being haunted.

It had been disused for many years, and very few people visited it, not entirely because it was situated in an out-of-the-way place, though that was one reason, but because of the evil reputation which clung to it.

Old settlers said that a murder had been committed there years before, and that ghosts made it their dwelling place.

Be this as it might; it was a lonesome place, and if there was one spot on the whole coast line where the wind howled most dismally, and around which the winter storms centered most drearily, it was the rocky headland where the old mill stood.

Men would go considerably out of their way to avoid it, and on wild nights it was left completely desolate, no one caring to even gaze at it from a distance at such times.

At about the time when I first became interested in the mystery of the place, an event had happened which set the whole village in a ferment, and added considerably to the bad reputation of the old mill.

A young woman of the place was suddenly among the missing, and it was rumored that she had been murdered.

Her husband was arrested, but he denied all knowledge of her whereabouts, and seemed as anxious to determine them as any one in the village.

He told me in confidence, after his release on bail, that his wife had been out of her mind for some time, although he had kept the sad fact a close secret from the curious villagers, and that he had no doubt she had hidden herself somewhere, and would return after awhile.

About this time strange figures were to be seen hovering about the old mill at night, and shrieks and other weird sounds were heard, among which were recognized the tones of the young woman's voice.

One dark, tempestuous night, I myself, in passing the mill, whither I had gone to ascertain if I could fathom the mystery, saw a white-robed figure standing in the tumble-down doorway, which beckoned to me to come nearer.

With a hand on my revolver, I hurried forward, but with a shriek the creature disappeared within the walls of the dilapidated structure, and I was alone.

I waited around for some time, but saw nothing more of the weird figure, all being as silent as the grave.

I was hidden in the shadow of one of the walls and was about to take my departure, the hour being late, when I suddenly heard the sound of approaching footsteps.

Peering carefully out, I saw a man walking rapidly towards the low entrance of the mill, through which he presently disappeared.

I waited for some time, expecting that he would come out, but it was at least an hour before he did so, and then he walked so rapidly that I was unable to discover his identity without being seen myself.

I instantly connected this mysterious visit with the dis-

appearance of Mrs. Blake, the lady in question, but I was not at all certain that Blake was the man I had seen.

I said nothing to him about the matter, as in case he was guilty, I did not want to awaken his suspicions.

The next night, which was more wild and blustering than any for several weeks, I visited the old mill again, this time provided with a dark lantern.

As I came near, I saw the white, uncanny figure standing in the doorway as upon the previous evening.

I advanced quickly, flashing the light from my lantern over the weird object, flooding it with the white rays.

The figure was that of a young woman, clad in a sort of nightdress, her hair floating over her shoulders in a tangled mass.

She screamed as I threw the light upon her, and, to my surprise, I recognized the face of Mrs. Blake.

The elfish expression of her countenance left me no room for doubting her to be insane, and her unnatural laughter strengthened my belief that she was in that unhappy frame of mind.

As I advanced she retreated, but I followed her up closely, determined to have a word with her, and if possible induce her to return to the village.

She glared at me out of those glassy eyes, and as she retreated her footfalls made no sound, as though she had been a creature of the fancy.

I followed closely, but she eluded me, and when I came to a rude door, through which I had seen her disappear, I found it firmly barred upon the inside.

I called to her by name, but all the response I received was a shriek which fairly froze my blood.

Convinced that I could do no more that night, I retired, determining to come again and with assistance.

Having made this resolve, I retraced my steps, and had just reached the outside when I once more heard footsteps.

Dodging behind the projecting angle of the crumbling wall, I waited until the figure had passed me, when I flashed my lantern upon it for an instant.

In that brief space I was enabled to recognize the nocturnal visitor; and I must say that, despite my suspicions, I was considerably surprised.

The man was Blake, the husband of the poor maniac.

He evidently saw the flash of my lantern, for he turned quickly and looked towards the spot where I was hid.

He did not see me, of course, and at that moment there came a gleam of lightning, followed by a thunder-clap; he was apparently satisfied that the first light was due to the same cause, and, muttering an imprecation upon the storm, he passed on into the gloom which pervaded the whole place.

After he had gone a few paces I followed slowly, but when I reached the barred door I found it as I had done previously, and heard no sound.

Whether he had been admitted I knew not, but after waiting a long time, and neither seeing nor hearing anything, I again took my departure, returning to the village.

The next day nothing was seen of Blake, and as he was a steady man at his work, the event caused no little surprise, and speculation was rife as to what had become of him.



Taking two of the villagers into my confidence, sailors, both of them, and men that could be trusted, I told them what I had seen, and then proposed that we make a visit to the old mill, in company, that very night.

They acquiesced, and, accordingly, a little before midnight, we stood on the bluff, well wrapped up, for the weather was boisterous, and fully armed, as we knew not what foes we might encounter.

It had been whispered by the villagers, and the belief was also by one of my companions, a regular grizzled old seadog, that the mill was the resort of a band of smugglers, and for that reason we had armed ourselves, though I did not credit the notion for an instant.

However, in case the supposition should prove correct, it would be well enough to go prepared to meet dangerous enemies, and therefore I made no objection to the proposal that we should arm ourselves.

As we entered the mill and passed along the low, rubbish choked passages, we heard a scream that fairly made our hair stand on end.

We paused and drew our revolvers, for at that moment a fierce gust of wind swept by us and a bright light shone in our faces.

The rude door which I had before seen was suddenly burst open, and a flood of unearthly light was seen proceeding from some place beyond.

There was another scream, and a man in his shirt sleeves fell backwards upon the ground, his face upturned and his arms extended.

The weird light shone upon his pale face, and his long hair straggled out upon the cold stones, while a pool of blood formed quickly about his head and oozed slowly away.

Standing in the doorway, in the full glow of the white light, was the ghostly figure of the maniac, her hair blowing about her face and her hands extended as if to wave us away.

"Go away, go away!" she screamed. "The grave is no place for you! the tomb is not fit for creatures of flesh and blood!"

Scarcely knowing whether I was awake or dreaming, I advanced a pace and discovered an ax hanging by the side of the man who had fallen.

The man was Blake, and he had been struck upon the head and killed by the strange creature now before us.

One glance at his upturned face convinced me that he was lifeless, and that his wife had killed him was beyond question.

The old seadog now took hold of the matter.

"Why did you kill him?" he asked, stepping forward.

"Ha, ha! they say I killed him, but it's false; the devil which he aroused within me killed him!"

As she sped away we followed her, but suddenly the uncanny white light which had filled the place disappeared, and we were left in darkness.

I saw the gleam of a white figure flitting ahead of me, however, and I gave chase, being resolved to secure the unfortunate woman, and, if possible, learn her sad story.

Suddenly there was a scream and then a splash, and I paused just in time to prevent myself from falling down

an open trap, formerly used for lowering goods to the beach below.

Throwing the light of my lantern down the yawning chasm, I saw, far below, the white figure of the unfortunate maniac lying crushed and evidently lifeless at the bottom.

As we could not reach the unfortunate creature from the mill, we concluded to return and go below by descending the cliff and walking around the beach.

We found the body of Blake, and discovered several wounds, any one of which would have caused death.

He was not a bad-looking man naturally, being considered rather handsome, but now he looked so ghastly that a shudder went through my frame despite my efforts to control myself.

The two sailors took him down to the village, while I went around under the cliffs to find the woman and see if she still lived.

I discovered the place easily enough, but not a single trace of her body could be seen.

I was satisfied that she still lived, although it was a marvel to me that she had not been instantly killed by the fall.

Confident that I could do nothing satisfactorily until the morning, I returned to the village, and after finding that the body of poor Blake had been given to the coroner, went to my hotel and turned in, as the saying was in those parts.

During the morning I was made aware of some facts concerning Blake that gave me more of an insight into the case than I had before had.

His wife had considerable property in her own right, and this would be his at her death.

That was one point.

They never lived very happily together, and it was said that Blake would not have mourned much if she had died before her time.

It was said that in case his wife did die there was a widow in the village who would gladly marry him, and upon whom he had looked with more than neighborly interest.

I learned also that Mrs. Blake had not been insane until recently, but that her husband's cruel treatment had driven her so.

We found the body of the poor woman the next day, the tide having washed it out to sea and cast it again upon the coast.

Years afterwards I was called to the deathbed of a criminal who wished to make a confession.

Among other matters, he told me that Blake had hired him to convey his wife to the old mill and keep her a close prisoner until her mind gave way, when she was to be taken to a distant asylum and entered under an assumed name.

In the meantime Blake, having given out that his wife was dead, intended to live on her money and enjoy himself.

He went to the mill every night, and by his lawless abuse soon turned the woman completely mad, her previous mental condition having been very nearly approaching insanity.



## NEWS OF THE DAY

Twelve hundred men and boys were thrown out of work of the Maxwell colliery of the Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre Coal Company, at Ashley, Pa., when 100 doorboys and patchers decided to strike, in order to play baseball. The action was taken when Burgess J. K. P. Fenner of the borough notified the boys that Sunday baseball would be prohibited in the future. The boys replied that they will keep the colliery idle every Saturday to play ball if the order is enforced. The colliery officials were unable to effect a settlement.

A travel course in physiography is an interesting item in the programme of the forthcoming summer session of Columbia University. This course will take the form of a physiographic excursion to the western United States, conducted by Prof. D. W. Johnson, lasting about two months. The party will visit the Devil's Tower, Yellowstone National Park, Glacier National Park, Crater Lake, the Yosemite Valley, Royal Gorge of the Arkansas, the Pike's Peak region, and probably also Lassen Peak and the Lake Bonneville region. The start is to be made from New York in July.

The religious creeds of the several presidents are here indicated: Washington, Episcopalian; John Adams, Unitarian; Jefferson, non-sectarian; Madison, Episcopalian, as was Monroe; J. Q. Adams, Unitarian; Jackson, Presbyterian; Van Buren, Reformed Dutch; Harrison and Tyler, Episcopalian; Polk, Presbyterian; Taylor, Episcopalian; Fillmore, Unitarian; Pierce, Episcopalian; Buchanan, Presbyterian; Lincoln, Presbyterian; Johnson, Grant and Hayes, Methodists; Garfield, Disciples; Arthur, Episcopalian; Cleveland and Harrison, Presbyterian; McKinley, Methodist; Roosevelt, Dutch Reformed; Taft, Unitarian, and Wilson, Presbyterian.

Seven million two hundred thousand roses are blooming on a single hedge surrounding a thirty-acre orange grove near Los Angeles, Cal. The estimate was made by J. L. Matthews, chairman of the county board of forestry, when the blossoms indicated nearly double the quantity of previous seasons. The hedge is eight feet high and four feet across the top. In it are La France, La Marque, Henrietta and Papa Gontier varieties. The property is owned by George W. Griffith. Matthews figured the total number of buds by carefully counting them on a squared section. So far as known this establishes a new record for quantity of roses on one hedge, even in southern California, where they grow in greatest profusion.

A Cape of Good Hope penny postage stamp, issue of 1861, red and creased, brought \$77.50 at a sale recently in the Collectors' Club, New York, and a vermillion pair of the same year brought \$88. A pair of fourpenny stamps of the same year sold for \$71, and a Cape fourpenny

stamp in gray blue brought \$76. Buyers paid \$43.50 for a ten-shilling Lagos brown-violet stamp of 1885; \$73 for a one-shilling New Brunswick red-violet stamp of 1851; \$54 for a one-shilling of 1851, and \$72.50 for a one-shilling dull violet of the same year. Sixty-six Sicilian Bomba head stamps were in the sale, choice specimens of which brought from \$27 to \$41. W. S. Scott conducted the sale for J. C. Morgenthau & Co.

Winding up their trip, which has been a triumph from coast to coast, the New York National basket ball team arrived home recently. The players, all of whom hail from the Rockaways, left New York three months ago and played their opening game at Wilkes-Barre, Pa. From there they worked their way out to San Francisco. The tour covered over 10,000 miles. Forty-five games were played and forty-four won. The strongest teams throughout the Middle West, where basket ball is popular, were played. Since their return the members of the team have been receiving congratulations from all over the country. Rockaway Beach has been holding a week of celebrations in honor of the players. The record of the New York Nationals will stand for many years, and it is doubtful if it has ever been equaled in any line of sport. The feat is even more remarkable from the fact that all the games were played upon strange floors.

The largest game preserve in the world is the continent of Africa—extending from the twentieth degree of north latitude down to the northern borders of Cape Colony and Natal. This great scheme was made possible by a treaty co-operation of England, Germany, France, Belgium, Portugal, Italy and Spain, by which it is provided that the hunting and destruction of vultures, secretary birds, owls, giraffes, gorillas, chimpanzees, mountain zebras, wild asses, white-tailed gnus, elands and the little Liberian hippopotami are absolutely prohibited. Similar protection is given the young of certain animals, including the elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, antelope, gazelle, ibex and chevrotain, and to the adults of these species when accompanied by their young. Particular stress is laid on the protection of young elephants, and elephant tusks weighing less than twenty pounds will be confiscated. The eggs of the ostrich and of many other birds are protected, but those of the crocodile, python and poisonous snakes are to be destroyed. Even lions, leopards, hyenas, harmful monkeys and large birds of prey may not be slaughtered at the hunter's will. Hunters are required to take out licenses, and the number of animals each may kill is limited. The use of nets and pitfalls is forbidden, nor may explosions be used for killing fish. The main object of this vast protective enterprise is economic, to encourage the domestication of the elephant, zebra and ostrich, and to husband the trade in wild animal products, which were threatened by the rapacity of market hunters and so-called sportsmen.



## INTERESTING ARTICLES

### GERALDINE FARRAR TO ACT FOR THE MOVIES.

The announcement was made the other day by the Lasky Feature Play Company that they had obtained the services of Geraldine Farrar, the Metropolitan prima donna, to appear before the moving picture camera in several of her most popular roles. Miss Farrar will return to New York at the close of the tour of the Metropolitan Company to make some records for a talking machine company. She will leave for the Lasky studios at Hollywood, California, June 15, in a special car provided for her. The diva's father and mother, and Mr. and Mrs. Morris Gest will accompany her. In Hollywood a villa has been leased for her use. Her contract covers a period of several seasons, and this summer she will be engaged eight weeks in giving characterizations of several of her most famous roles. For her services she will receive, it is said, a salary that will amount to \$2 a minute while she is before the camera.

### JAPANESE BREACH OF PROMISE SUIT.

Japan's highest court has awarded to Miss Hede Nozawa \$10,000 for breach of promise. Not only is this the first breach of promise case in Japan, but the court has taken a long step forward in recognition of the rights of women, who under the old regime were considered more or less as chattels, as they still are in most parts of the Orient. A marriage is not valid in Japan unless registered, and registration is not compulsory or even usual. Miss Nozawa had consented to share Sozahiru Vanaka's house on the condition that their union be entered on the records. Vanaka put the matter off for a month; then left the house after a quarrel. Instead of yielding to circumstances in the meek Oriental way, Miss Nozawa sued. One court threw her case out. She took it to another and lost again. Undiscouraged, she went to the highest tribunal in the land. Witnesses who had arranged the union appeared for her and the result was damages amounting in Japan to a small fortune.

### ABOUT WAR STAMPS.

The great struggle in Europe is furnishing stamp collectors with numerous stamps of a provisional character, says the American Boy. The most striking change is found in the stamps of certain German colonies which have been surcharged for use by the English-French occupation forces.

The German colonial possessions of Samoa and Togo, with the familiar ship design, have been overprinted in a very substantial manner, indicating the passing of these islands from the control of Germany to England. These stamps are very scarce, only a small number having been overprinted, and they will no doubt give way to New Zealand stamps surcharged for use in these two possessions.

Another war set may be found in the set of German stamps surcharged with the word "Belgien" and with the value in centimes. This set is common and the four varieties can be obtained for about 25 cents.

The Indian troops in France are provided with a set of the current King George India overprinted "I. E. F.," meaning "India Expeditionary Force."

Various charity stamps have been issued, notably by France, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Russia. Most of these stamps are face value, the excess amount being used in connection with relief work.

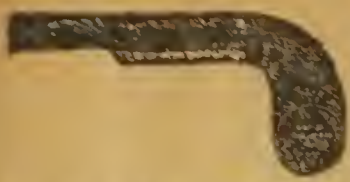
France has issued a permanent Red Cross stamp. The design is similar to the ordinary 10-cent, but the value has been placed higher up and in the lower left corner there is a tablet bearing a plus sign and 5c. With a nominal face value of 2 cents, the stamp is sold for 3 cents.

### ST. SOPHIA.

It has been reported that the Turkish military authorities will probably surrender Constantinople to the Allies rather than have the city undergo a bombardment from the Dardanelles. A desire to protect beautiful St. Sophia from injury is said to have influenced this decision. This mosque, originally a Christian church, is the crowning triumph of Byzantine architecture. At the command of the Emperor Justinian it was erected early in the sixth century, the first stone being laid in the year 532 A. D., on the site of the two older churches, the first of which was built by the great Constantine. Not long after St. Sophia was completed the edifice was damaged by an earthquake which shook down most of the dome. In the repair and restoration which followed the church was enlarged and ennobled. The present dome rises at its center 180 feet above the ground and has a diameter of 107 feet; however, its curve is so slight that its depth at the center is only 46 feet. Around its rim are forty windows, while underneath are several tiers of galleries supported by gold arches resting upon many colored pillars, some of which have been brought as plunder from distant temples. In 1453 Mahomet converted St. Sophia into a mosque, adding minarets at the external angles of the building and making changes in its interior. These consisted chiefly in the destruction or concealment of the Christian mosaics which adorned the walls. Should a Christian power permanently occupy the city, doubtless these mosaics would be restored and brought to light again. In contrast with the notable churches and cathedrals of Central Europe the exterior of St. Sophia is most disappointing, being baldly proportioned and uncouth in appearance. It is the interior of the mosque which has made it famous. Its many flights of domes and semi-domes, its vistas of arches and columns, and finally the great shallow bowl of its central dome, all decorated in the lavish coloring of the Orient, give an effect of bewildering beauty.



## ROUGH RIDER DISC PISTOLS.



Made of nicely colored wood  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches long. The power is furnished by rubber bands. Ten discs of cardboard with each pistol. Price, 6c. each, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

## MAGIC PIPE.



Made of a regular corn-cob pipe, with rubber figures inside; by blowing through the stem the figure will jump out. Made in following figures: rabbits, donkeys, cats, chickens, etc.

Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

## NEW SURPRISE NOVELTY.



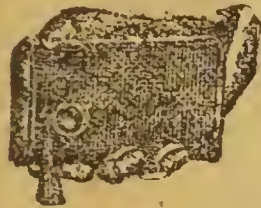
Foxy Grandpa, Mr. Peewee and other comical faces artistically colored, to which is attached a long rubber tube, connected with a rubber ball, which can be filled with water, the rubber ball being carried in the pocket, a slight pressure on the bulb causes a long stream, the result can easily be seen.

Price, 15c.,

Postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

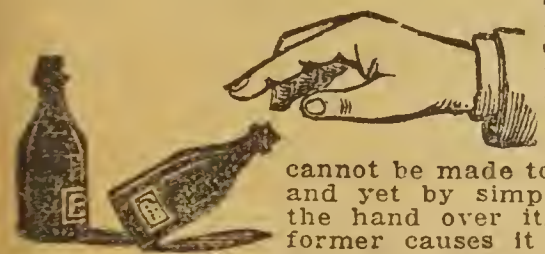
## POCKET FLASH LIGHT SQUIRT.



Made of decorated enameled metal, representing an exact flash pocket lighter; by pressing a button instead of the bulb's eye, an electrically lighted up stream of water is ejected into the face of the spectator; an entirely new and amusing novelty.

Price, 35c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



**The Bottle Imp.**—The peculiarity of this little bottle is that it cannot be made to lie down, and yet by simply passing the hand over it, the performer causes it to do so.

This trick affords great amusement, and is of convenient size to carry about.

Price, 10c.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

## FINGER MOUSE.



We need hardly tell you about this great novelty. It has proven one of the greatest sellers ever put on the market. The men on the street have sold nearly a million, and every day the demand for them is growing.

The head is like a mouse in every respect. The "body" is also like a mouse but is hollow, allowing the index finger to slip into it. While you are sitting at the dinner table, one of your friends who is "in on the trick" says she just saw a mouse and a moment or two after the head of the mouse is seen to creep up over the edge of the table. Can you imagine the surprise and consternation? There are a thousand other stunts you can play with this mouse, such as slipping it out of your sleeve, your pockets, etc. This trick is very popular with the ladies. Price by mail, 10c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

## CHANGING MONEY TRICK BOX.



With this trick box you can make money change, from a penny into a dime or vice versa. Also make dimes appear and disappear at your command. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



**MAGIC CARD BOX.**—A very cleverly made box of exchanging or vanishing cards. In fact, any number of tricks of this character can be performed by it. A very necessary magical accessory. Price, 15c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



**GOLD PLATED COMBINATION SET.**—With square turquoise stones.

Price, 10c., postpaid.

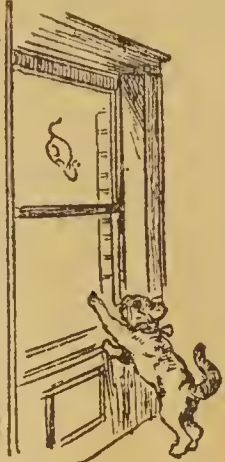
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



**VANISHING COINS.**—A coin held in the palm of the hand is made to vanish when the hand is closed. Only one hand used. No practice required. Wonderful effect. Price, 25c.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

## THE CREEPING MOUSE



This is the latest novelty out. The mouse is of very natural appearance. When placed upon a mirror, wall, window or any other smooth surface, it will creep slowly downward without leaving the perpendicular surface. It is furnished with an adhesive gum-roll underneath which makes it stick. Very amusing to both young and old.

Price 10 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

## THE MYSTIC RING.



A Brand-New Trick, Just Out.—Puzzling, Mystifying and Perplexing. A metal ring is handed around for examination, and is found to be solid, unbroken

japanned iron. A cane, a pencil or a string is held tightly at each end by a spectator. The performer lightly taps the cane with the ring, and the ring suddenly is seen to be encircling the cane. How did the ring pass the spectator's two hands and get on the cane? The most mystifying trick ever invented. Others charge 75 cents for this trick; but our price, including instruction, is 12c., postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

## THE DANCING NIGGER



A comical toy with which you can have no end of fun. It consists of a cut-out figure fastened to a thread suspended between the ends of a spring. By pressing the wires between the fingers and thumb the figure will dance in the funniest manner. Price 10 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

## GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickeled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

## LITTLE CLINCHERS

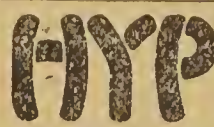


With a pair of these creepers clinched on your shoes you can defy the slipperiest ice or snow. No matter how slippery the road or how steep the hill, these claws of steel will carry you safely over them. A child can adjust them in 30 seconds. No nails, straps, screws or rivets are needed. They will not injure your shoes. No need to remove them indoors—simply fold the heel-plate forward, reversing the spikes under the instep. They are comfortable, durable and invisible. Just the thing for postmen, golfers, hunters, woodsmen, brakemen, miners and all who would insure life and limb in winter weather. 25 cents a pair, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



**30 DAYS FREE TRIAL** and freight prepaid on the new 1915 "RANGER" bicycle. Write at once for our big catalog and special offer. **Marvelous Improvements.** Extraordinary values in our 1915 price offers. You cannot afford to buy without getting our latest propositions. **WRITE TODAY.** Boys, be a "Rider Agent" and make big money taking orders for bicycles and supplies. Get our liberal terms on a sample to introduce the new "RANGER." **TIRES, equipment, sundries and everything in the bicycle line half usual prices.** Factory prices on Motorcycle and Automobile Supplies. **MEAD CYCLE CO., DEPT. H 188 CHICAGO**



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## September Morn

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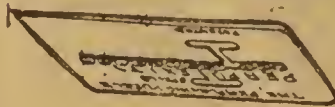
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